NATION

Actor Mammooty denies power group's existence in Mollywood

≫ Page: 4 ≪

BUSINESS

ATF price cut 4.6%, commercial LPG up Rs39/cylinder

≫ Page: 7 ≪

SPORTS

Dirty Seine: Paralympic triathlon events postponed

≫ Page: 8 ≪

www.twitter.com/EnglishSalar
www.facebook.com/EnglishSalar
www.instagram.com/dailysalarenglish
youtube.com/@dailysalardigital

SALAR
DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

سالار روزنامہ بنگلور

Website: salarnews.in | www.magzter.com | 2 SEPTEMBER 2024 | MONDAY | BENGALURU | 27 SAFAR, 1446 AH | Vol 4 | Issue No 221 | Pages: 8

WE ARE HIRING

REPORTERS
WEB-EDITOR
SUB-EDITOR

Journalism degree preferred but not essential.

Reporter: 5-6 years experience.

Web-editor: 2-4 years experience.

Sub editors freshers welcome.

SEND YOUR CV TO:

hr.salarnews@gmail.com
anushreeirwin@gmail.com

Rains wreak havoc in Andhra & T'gana

110 villages submerged in Telangana; 9 dead in Andhra; schools shut in both states

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu with others during a visit to a flood-affected area, in Vijayawada. **PHOTO: PTI**

HYDERABAD/ AMARAVATI, 1 SEPT

Heavy rains continued to lash many parts of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh on Sunday leading to severe flooding. 110 villages submerged under floodwaters in Khammam district in Telangana. Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy held an emergency review with ministers, officials and elected members.

A woman died and three others were feared washed away in separate rain-related incidents in Mahabubabad and Khammam districts on Sunday.

Due to heavy rains and waterlogging over the tracks at several locations on South Central Railway (SCR) network, as many as 99 trains were cancelled and four trains were partially cancelled while 54 trains were diverted , an SCR official said. Following the Union Minister Sanjay Kumar's orders, nine NDRF teams, three each from Chennai, Visakhapatnam, and Assam, have been dispatched to Telangana. He said he spoke with senior NDRF officials to coordinate the rescue efforts and also discussed the situation and the ongoing rescue operations with Telangana Revenue Minister Pon guleti Srinivasa Reddy.

A woman died when the car she was travelling in along with her father washed away while crossing an overflowing stream in Maripeda mandal Mahabubabad district in the early hours of Sunday, police said. They were proceeding in the car to Hyderabad to take a flight from the airport, police said, adding the vehicle was traced and the body of the woman was recovered and efforts were on to locate her father, who is still missing.

In another incident, two family members were feared washed away in flood waters after the wall of their house collapsed in Kusumanchi mandal of Khammam district and efforts were on to locate them, officials said.

Meanwhile, unprecedented rainfall in the past two days paralysed life at several places in Andhra Pradesh, especially in Vijayawada and vicinity while 17,000 rain-affected people were evacuated across the state. Addressing a press conference at the Andhra Pradesh State Disaster Management Authority (APSDMA) in Tadepalli, Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu said massive amounts of rainfall rocked the state. Schools in both state are closed. "Due to the heavy rain, Vijayawada and Guntur cities have been completely marooned. Vijayawada-Guntur national highway at Kaza and Vijayawada-Hyderabad national highway at Jaggaiahpeta were totally marooned," said Naidu.

He said 94 more places in 14 districts received rainfall between 7 and 12 cm and added that nine were dead and one missing. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 4

Yettinahole project to be inaugurated on 6 Sept: DKS

BENGALURU, 1 SEPT

Deputy Chief Minister and Irrigation Minister DK Shivakumar announced that the highly anticipated Yettinahole project, which aims to supply water to seven districts in Karnataka, will be inaugurated on 6 September on the day of Gowri festival. He said, "There were many criticisms. There were some disputes pertaining to forest land. Once this land is handed over to us, water will flow into the main canals. The water is being lifted from 7 barrages and the water is temporarily released to Vani Vilas Sagar dam." ***—Salar News***

>>>More on Page 2

11 die during physical tests for police exam

RANCHI, 1 SEPT

Eleven candidates died while undertaking physical tests during a drive to recruit excise constables in Jharkhand, police said on Sunday. Physical tests under the Jharkhand excise constable competitive examinations began on 22 August in seven centres across Ranchi, Giridih, Hazaribag, Palamu, East Singhbhum and Sahebganj districts. IG (Operations) Amol V Homkar said cases of unnatural death were registered and investigations were underway. A total of 1,27,772 aspirants appeared for the physical tests till 30 August, out of which 78,023 cleared it. ***—PTI***

IndiGo flight diverted to Nagpur due to bomb hoax

JABALPUR, 1 SEPT

An IndiGo flight from Jabadlpur to Hyderabad was diverted to Nagpur on Sunday after receiving a bomb threat. As per airline, IndiGo flight number 6E 7308 operating from Jabalpur to Hyderabad was diverted to Nagpur due to a bomb threat. "Upon landing, all passengers were disembarked, and mandatory security checks were promptly initiated. Passengers were provided with assistance and refreshments, and we sincerely apologize for any inconvenience caused," the airline said in a statement. Earlier in August, Air India flight 657 landed at Thiruvananthapuram Airport following a bomb threat, which was later found to be a hoax. ***—ANI***

Manipur burning: 2 killed in militants attack in Imphal

IMPHAL, 1 SEPT

Security forces, including State and Central units, have been deployed in the area to stabilise the situation **PHOTO: PTI**

Two people, including a woman, were killed and nine others injured when suspected militants launched a gun-and-bomb attack in Manipur's Imphal West district on Sunday, police said.

According to police, militants fired indiscriminately from hilltop positions towards the low-lying valley areas of Koutruk and neighbouring Kadangband killing two people and injuring nine others. Several houses were also damaged due to heavy shelling by the militants, they added.

Of the nine injured, five sustained bullet wounds, while the others suffered splinter injuries from bomb explosions, hospital officials said.

The sudden assault on the unsuspecting village caused widespread panic, forcing many residents, including women, children, and the elderly, to flee to safer areas, police added. The body of the deceased woman Ngangbam Surbala Devi, 31, has been taken to the Regional Institute of Medical Sciences (RIMS) for post-mortem examination. The identity of the other victim is yet to be ascertained, police said.

Security forces, including State and Central units, have been deployed in the area to stabilise the situation. *—PTI*

Censor Board postpones 'Emergency' release

NEW DELHI, 1 SEPT

PHOTO: X

The upcoming movie starring Kangana Ranaut Emergency has been postponed. The Mandi Lok Sabha MP and the actor has alleged that a member of the Central Board of Film Certification has received threats due to which the movie's clearance was stopped.

*T*aking to X, Kangana who played the role of former prime minister Indira Gandhi in the movie, said "There are rumours doing the rounds that our film, Emergency, has been granted Censor certificate. This is not true. In fact, our film had been cleared but certification has been stopped because many threats were coming in. Death threats. The Censor Board members are getting threats.

We are under pressure not to show the assassination of Indira Gandhi, not to show Bhindranwale, not to show the Punjab riots. I don't know what will be left to show then... This is unbelievable for me and I am very sorry for the state of things in this country."

—PTI

Panic as leopard strays near Bengaluru

BENGALURU, 1 SEPT

Residents of BRS Layout in Kyalasanahalli in Jigani on the outskirts of Bengaluru were in panic after they spotted a leopard straying into their locality on Sunday. The CCTV footage has shown a leopard taking a stroll in their area.

According to the residents, they woke up in the wee hours of Sunday after dogs started barking repeatedly. They demanded that the Forest department catch the big cat. Jigani is located near the sprawling Bannerghatta National Park.

—PTI

OPPOSITION HITS OUT

2 IIT-BHU gangrape accused released; row erupts

LUCKNOW, 1 SEPT

Opposition parties on Sunday targeted the Uttar Pradesh government after two of the three accused in the IIT-BHU gangrape case were released on bail, saying that it exposed the hypocrisy of the BJP-led dispensation's claims about women's security.

In a post on X, Samajwadi Party (SP) President Akhilesh Yadav shared a video which claimed that the accused were granted bail due to the state government's weak perusal of the case.

The Opposition's attack came after photos of the two accused, Anand alias Abhishek Chauhan and Kunal Pandey, being accorded a warm welcome after being released from jail and cutting a cake went viral on social media.

Reportedly, Chauhan and Pandey were released from a Varanasi jail last week.

Allahabad High Court Justice Krishan Pahal granted bail to Chauhan on 2 July and to Pandey on 4 July.

Pandey's counsel told the court that he had no criminal history and had been languishing in jail since 31 December last year.

- The three accused allegedly raped a woman student of the Indian Institute of Technology-Banaras Hindu University (IIT-BHU) when she had come out of her hostel with a friend on the night of 1 November last year

In his post on X, SP chief Yadav said people are fed up with the BJP's politics and "anarchy".

Senior SP leader Juhie Singh said, "Women's safety? Fair justice? Harsh punishment? All this is just lip service in Uttar Pradesh."

Congress also attacked Prime Minister Narendra Modi over the issue, saying it has exposed the hypocrisy of his government.

The three accused allegedly raped a woman student of the Indian Institute of Technology-Banaras Hindu University (IIT-BHU) when she had come out of her hostel with a friend on the night of 1 November last year, according to the complaint lodged in the matter. *—PTI*

People protest against the rape accuseds' released on Sunday **PHOTO: PTI**

Man molests nurse in WB

BOLPUR, 1 SEPT

A nurse at a government hospital in West Bengal's Birbhum district was allegedly molested and verbally abused by a male patient. A man who came in with high fever late on Saturday night tried to outrage the modesty of an on-duty nurse at Illambazar block hospital. The hospital authorities immediately informed police who arrested him and sent him to Bolpur sub-divisional hospital for treatment. *—PTI*

WB lab techie held for rape

HOWRAH, 1 SEPT

A laboratory technician has been arrested for allegedly molesting a minor girl at a State-run hospital in West Bengal's Howrah district on Saturday evening, where the 12-year-old girl was admitted last week. A family member of the minor girl claimed that the accused had touched her "inappropriately" and threatened her. *—PTI*

WIN FOR ANIME

Miyazaki honoured with Magsaysay Award

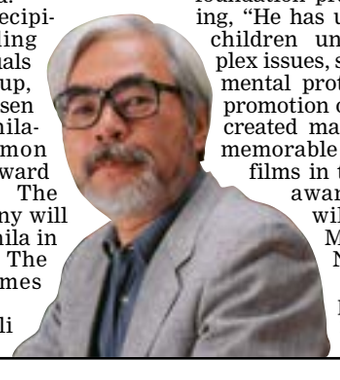
MANILA, 1 SEPT

Film director and co-founder of Studio Ghibli, Hayao Miyazaki, has been honoured with this year's prestigious Ramon Magsaysay Award, often referred to as Asia's Nobel Prize.

The global announcement of the 2024 Ramon Magsaysay Awardees was announced on Saturday.

Miyazaki, one of the co-founders of Studio Ghibli and the director behind critically acclaimed movies like 'My Neighbor Totoro', 'Spirited Away', 'Princess Mononoke, 'Howl's Moving Castle', 'Ponyo' and 'The Boy and the Heron', created numerous animated films addressing challenging topics such as environmental conservation and harmony, and made them accessible to young audiences, The Japan Times reported.

The 2024 recipients, including three individuals and one group, were also chosen by the Manila-based Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation. The award ceremony will be held in Manila in November, The Japan Times reported.



Studio Ghibli shared the news on X handle.

The post read, "Hayao Miyazaki wins the Ramon Magsaysay Award, known as the "Nobel Prize of Asia."

The post also stated, "The foundation praised him, stating, "He has used art to help children understand complex issues, such as environmental protection and the promotion of peace. He has created many of the most memorable and beloved films in the world." The award ceremony will be held in Manila in November."

The prize is presented to individuals and organizations that have significantly impacted Asia. It was created as a tribute to the former President of the Philippines, Ramon Magsaysay, renowned for his integrity, as per The Japan Times.

Meanwhile, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman described Miyazaki as someone who "serves anime like a magician" and noted that anime has "much for adults" after his win. Sitharaman highlighted two of his renowned films, 'My Neighbor Totoro' and 'Kiki's Delivery Service', calling them "masterpieces" that she could watch repeatedly.

—Agencies

GST collections rise 10% to Rs 1.75L cr in August

NEW DELHI, 1 SEPT

- An July, gross Goods and Services Tax (GST) mop-up was Rs 1.82 lakh crore, while in August last year it was Rs 1.59 lakh crore.

Gross GST collections in August grew 10 per cent to about Rs 1.75 lakh crore, reflecting higher domestic consumption.

As per the government data released on Sunday, gross GST revenues from domestic transactions grew 9.2 per cent to about Rs 1.25 lakh crore.

Revenues from import of goods were up 12.1 per cent to Rs 49,976 crore.

In July, gross Goods and Services Tax (GST) mop-up was Rs 1.82 lakh crore, while in August last year it was Rs 1.59 lakh crore.

MS Mani, Partner, Deloitte India, said a 10 per cent increase in collections on a year-to-month basis at the start of the festive season for the year indicates that consumption is robust and will only improve further in the coming festival months.

"This would give renewed confidence that the collection targets for the year would be achieved. There are some differences in the GST collection increases across major states which may need a deep dive," Mani said. *—PTI*

PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

'Need report on wild animal deaths due to electrocution'

BENGALURU, 1 SEPT

Peeved at the growing incidents of wild animals dying due to electrocution, Forest Minister Eshwara Khandre has sought details from the forest officials about the number of such instances in the past five years and the action taken against the culprits. In a letter to the Additional Chief Secretary in the Forest and Environment Department and the Principal Chief Conservator of Forest, Khandre also said that hence forth, they should send a copy of the postmortem report on the wild animals which die of electrocution. The officers should also send him a detailed report on the cause and action taken against those who put up an electrical fence to protect their crops. In the recent past, many animals, mostly elephants and their calves have died due to electrocution. ***—PTI***

CM to offer prayers at Mysuru Chamundi temple

MYSURU, 1 SEPT

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah will visit Mysuru and offer prayers in Chamundeshwari Temple at 12.30pm on Monday. It is learnt the Chief Minister will reach Mysuru by chopper at 11.20 am and visit the temple. He is also slated to chair Srikshetra Chamundeshwari Development Authority progress review meeting atop the hills.

Siddaramaiah's visit to Mysuru comes on the same day of hearing in the court on petition challenging his prosecution by Governor Thawar Chand Gehlot He will return to Bengaluru on the same day after 4.30 pm. ***—Salar News***

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar was in for a nostalgic surprise when his first bike - a Yezdi which he used to ride in his college days - was refurbished after 40 long years. ***PHOTO: SALAR***

New app for 87th Kannada Sahitya Sammelana

MYSURU,1 SEPT

The upcoming 87th State-level Kannada Sahitya Sammelana, scheduled to be held in Melukote, Mandya district, this December, will feature a unique technological addition. Melukote MLA Darshan Puttannaiah, an IT entrepreneur, has announced the development of an exclusive app to facilitate registration, accommodation, live streaming of events, and more. As the chairman of the Campaign and Publicity Committee, the MLA shared details during a preliminary meeting held in Mandya on Sunday. He stated that the app, which he will develop at no cost, aims to enhance the experience for attendees and help publicise the three-day event, which will run from 20-22 December. The app will be developed in collaboration with the Kendra Kannada Samithi and the Events Registration Committee. Guests and participants attending the Kannada Sammelana can use the app to register their names and access other event-related information. In addition to the app, MLA Puttannaiah has formed five subcommittees tasked with ensuring extensive publicity for the event across various media platforms. ***—Salar News***

Citing pending dues, BBMP workers to go on strike today

BBMP failed to pay 25% of bill arrears for finished projects

BENGALURU, 1 SEPT

Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) contractor workers halted all ongoing projects, thus initiating a strike in response to the non-payment of pending bills for completed works.

The workers will protest on Monday after the BBMP failed to pay 25 per cent of their bill arrears for projects that have already been completed under its jurisdiction.

According to the press release by the BBMP contract workers, over the past two years, the BBMP has retained about Rs 1,600 crores in payments, leading to significant financial strain for the contractors. They said despite the completion of work, the corporation has only paid 75 per cent of the billed amount.

The contract workers on Sunday, appealed to Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar, urging him to intervene and release the pending dues.

Road works, infrastructure development projects, ward-level maintenance, large canal works, white-topping projects, and electrical departments are affected by the call for protest.

The BBMP Contractors Association has expressed their frustration, highlighting that the 25 per cent of bills retained by the corporation has led to severe financial distress.

They claim that they are reeling under debt due to the non-payment of dues. Many contractors have taken loans from banks and other sources to complete the projects, but the withheld payments have left them unable to pay bank interest, GST, and other charges.

Hence, the association has requested BBMP Chief Commissioner Tushar Girinath for release of the withheld funds immediately to alleviate the financial woes.

—Salar News

DyCM gives 15-day deadline to BBMP to fill potholes in City

BENGALURU, 1 SEPT

PHOTO: PTI

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar has issued a 15-day deadline to BBMP Chief Tushar Girinath, directing that all potholes within the jurisdiction of the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) must be repaired.

Speaking at the Janaspandana event held at his Kanakapura residence, Shivakumar emphasised the urgency of addressing the numerous complaints regarding potholes across the City, especially those worsened by the ongoing rainy season.

He highlighted the existing mechanism for the public to report potholes through the "Road Pothole Attention" app, which allows citizens to upload photos of damaged roads. He stressed that this initiative should be given top priority by the BBMP.

He assured residents of his district that he would personally address their grievances twice, on the second and fourth Saturdays of every month.

"People from Kanakapura, Ramanagara, Channapatna, Magadi, and Harohalli taluks can bring their issues to me directly. It's disheartening to see our people traveling to Bengaluru and waiting endlessly. I've set aside these days to ensure their concerns are addressed promptly," he said.

When asked about encroachment evictions starting across the state, Shivakumar deferred responsibility to the concerned ministers.

—Salar News

Yettinahole project to begin on 6 Sept: DKS

BENGALURU, 1 SEPT

DK Shivakumar ***PHOTO: PTI***

Deputy Chief Minister and Irrigation Minister DK Shivakumar announced that the highly anticipated Yettinahole project, which aims to supply water to seven districts in Karnataka, will be inaugurated on 6 September on the day of Gowri festival.

The project, which has been eagerly awaited by the districts of Kolar, Chikkaballapura, Bengaluru Rural, Ramanagara, Tumakuru, and Hassan will be inaugurated by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah. Speaking to reporters on Sunday, he said, "There were many criticisms about this project. There were some disputes pertaining to forest land but we are sorting them out. Once this land is handed over to us, water will flow into the main canals. Currently, the water is being lifted from 7 barrages and the water is temporarily released to Vani Vilas Sagar dam."

Shivakumar also mentioned that during the inauguration, the beneficiaries of the project will be able to witness the water being lifted. He noted that the event will be inclusive, inviting leaders from all political parties, farmers, and district in-charge ministers to participate.

Regarding the Justice John Michael D'Cunha Committee report on the alleged Covid-19 scam and former Health Minister K. Sudhakar's statement, Shivakumar stated that he is not yet fully informed about the contents of the report or Sudhakar's comments.

Once this land is handed over to the government, water will flow into main canals. Currently, water is being lifted from seven barrages and is temporarily released to Vani Vilas Sagar dam. *—Salar News*

FARMERS' BODY TO ORGANISE MEGA CONVENTION ON 15 SEPT IN HARYANA

MYSURU, 1 SEPT

Karnataka State Sugarcane Growers Association State unit Chief Kurubur Shanthakumar several farmers' organisations across the country announced that a mega convention will be held on 15 September at Jind in Haryana to prevail upon the union government to fulfil their various demands.

Speaking to reporters in Mysuru on Sunday, he said that one more convention will be organised by Samyukta Kisan Morcha on 22 September at Kurukshetra in Haryana. He also demanded the union government direct all banks to stop the forceful recovery of crop loans, and auctioning farm lands from banks. He condemned the State government's decision to grant 3,600 acres of land at the price of Rs 1.25 lakh per acre to Jindal Company in Ballari district. *—Salar News*

NEW BOOK IN CART

Infosys Foundation former chairperson and author Sudha Murthy and writer Twinkle Khanna launch Murthy's book 'Grandpa's Bag of Stories', in Bengaluru on Sunday ***PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD***

2 new spider species found in Western Ghats

KOLKATA, 1 SEPT

The Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) announced the discovery of two spider species in the Western Ghats region, a biodiversity hotspot, in south India,

A ZSI statement said the newly discovered species - Mimetus Spinatus and Mimetus Parvulus - highlight the importance of the region.

Mimetus Spinatus and Mimetus Parvulus were collected from the Mookambika Wildlife Sanctuary, Karnataka and Ernakulam district of Kerala respectively.

The addition of two new spiders brings the number of Mimetus species in India to three, all of which have been spotted from the southern part of the country, the surveyor said.

Speaking about the discovery, ZSI Director Dr Dhriti Banerjee said, "The Western Ghats plays a crucial role in the climatic conditions of the country and continue to surprise scientists with their high levels of endemism."

The discovery was made by a research team comprising Dr Souvik Sen along with Dr Sudhin PP and Dr Pradeep M Sankaran.

This discovery highlights the need for continued exploration and conservation efforts in the region, which is one of the world's hottest biodiversity hotspots, she said on Saturday.

Banerjee emphasised the importance of the Western Ghats, in preserving India's rich biodiversity. *—PTI*

Howdah festival: Abhimanyu carries weight with ease

MYSURU, 1 SEPT

The weight-carrying rehearsal for elephants to carry the golden howdah during Dasara began here in Mysuru on Sunday.

The rehearsal started with 58-year-old Dasara jumbo Abhimanyu who carried approximately 525 kg of dead weight (sandbags) on his back effortlessly and walked for about 5 km of Dasara procession route with ease. He covered the distance within one hour and 20 minutes. He was accompanied by Kumki elephants like Lakshmi and Varamahalakshmi on his sides.

This is the fifth time the Dasara jumbo captain Abhimanyu carrying the golden howdah weighs around 750 kg. Speaking to **Salar News**, Deputy Conservator of Forests (Wildlife) Prabhugowda said, "Soon the department will also finalise the second line of other few elephants to train to carry weight. He also said that all the elephants that arrived in the city are healthy except Kanjan elephant as his foot was twisted. He was given rest."

The festival 'naada habba dasara' procession will begin on 12 October. The total weight of the howdah and other things which will be mounted on Abhimanya will be around 1,000 kg according to officials.

—Salar News

OPEN FOR PUBLIC IN 3 MONTHS

The new coach will undergo rigorous trials and tests for the next ten days before rolling it out on the track for further testing ***PHOTO: PTI***

Vande Bharat sleeper prototype unveiled

BENGALURU, 1 SEPT

Union Minister for Railways Ashwini Vaishnaw on Sunday unveiled the prototype version of the Vande Bharat sleeper coach here at the BEML's facility.

The coach will undergo rigorous trials and tests for the next ten days before rolling it out on the track for further testing, Vaishnaw told reporters.

The train is expected to be open for passenger operation in the next three months, he added.

"After Vande Bharat chair cars, we were working on Vande Bharat sleeper cars. Its manufacturing has now been completed. This train will go out for the trial and testing from the BEML facility today," Vaishnaw said.

Vaishnaw said the Railways is working on four configurations -- Vande Bharat chair cars, Vande Bharat sleeper cars, Vande Bharat Metro cars and Amrit Bharat -- which will change the way people travel.

According to him, the Vande Bharat sleeper train with 16 coaches is meant for overnight journeys and will cover 800km to 1,200km. The oxygen level inside the train and virus protection, a lesson learnt from COVID-19 pandemic, are added features of the train.

—PTI

'K-RIDE needs technical strength for BSRP'

BENGALURU, 1 SEPT

Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw on Sunday said the Karnataka Rail Infrastructure Development Company Limited (K-RIDE) requires more technical strength to execute the Bengaluru Suburban Railway Project.

The Minister said he would visit the City after a few weeks and review the Bengaluru Suburban Railway Project (BSRP).

"The major issue last time when I reviewed it was the requirement of the technical strength in the organisation K-RIDE because it's BSRP a very complex project," Vaishnaw told said.

On deadline, Vaishnaw said the State government has 51 per cent equity in the project and hence the Centre has to work with the State government to make sure that everything is in place.

"It's a joint venture of the State and the Centre, and the State has the control of 51 per cent," he explained.

The Minister said last time when was in the City he had requested to the State government to increase the technical strength. *—PTI*

BNU chalks plans to hone skills in lecturers, students

BENGALURU, 1 SEPT

To cone the communicative, analytical and technical skills of lecturers and students of the 290 colleges under its umbrella, the Bengaluru North University (BNU) has taken up several programmes, said Prof Niranjan Vanalli, Vice Chancellor of the University.

He said as a first measure the University has set up a Skill Enhancement and Placement cell and many programmes were implemented by the cell in the last few weeks. He stressed that there are plans to enter into Memorandum of Understanding with Intrn Forte, an online course marketing company to provide special online courses to Post Graduate students. BNU staff and the company held preliminary tests to around 350 students of PG Centre in Kolar and among them 21 students who topped the tests were offered course of their choice at free of cost by the company.

—Salar News

1,450 MEMBERS ATTEND

Children join hands to welcome Ganesha the green way

BENGALURU, 1 SEPT

As Ganesha Chaturthi nears Bengalureans have resorted to eco-friendly ways to celebrate the festival. Many people are opting for idols made from sustainable materials like clay and mud instead of the traditional Plaster of Paris (PoP) idols. In light of this, several NGOs and community groups across the City have organised workshops to help residents create eco-friendly Ganesha idols, thus fostering a sense of community and environmental responsibility.

The Bal Bhavan Society in collaboration with the B.CLIP Alumni Association and B. PAC, hosted a special Clay Ganesha Making Workshop for children at the Jawahar Bal Bhavan Sunday. Around 1,450 children and teenagers, aged 7 to 16 attended the annual event, aimed at promoting eco-friendly celebrations during Ganesha Chaturthi.

Participants were provided with all the necessary materials, including1kg of Shadu clay—a type of fire clay that dissolves easily in water—along with plates and expert instructors to guide them through the process. Unlike PoP idols, which are commonly used during the festival, these clay idols are environmentally safe and help preserve nature. For this event alone, around 1,500 kg of clay was brought in.

Speaking to **Salar News** SG Veeranna, a member of the B. CLIP Alumni Association, talked about the importance of using eco-friendly materials for celebrations. "This event is primarily to showcase the importance of an eco-friendly celebration of the festival, he said. He highlighted that PoP idols often contain asbestos, a known carcinogen, which can leak into the environment and pose significant health risks.

Eight-year-old Aarav K, who attended the event with his parents, said, "I loved making my own Ganesha with clay. It was fun, and my parents told me it's good for nature too." Fourteen-year-old Shruthi B added, "I used to think PoP idols were the best because they looked nice, but now I know they harm the environment when we immerse them." "It's a wonderful occasion where my children learn about the importance of preserving our environment by making these idols in an eco-friendly way," said Kruthika N, a 38-year-old IT professional, brought her children—six-year-old Anvikha and ten-year-old Adithya.

Another parent, Rajesh R, who attended with his 10-year-old daughter Avanthika said, "the workshop not only allows kids to get creative but also educates them about the importance of eco-friendly practices."

—Salar News

Children take part in the making of Ganesh idol competition with clay ahead of Ganesha Chaturthi festival in Bengaluru ***PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD***

Mob vandlasies house of rape accused in WB

KOLKATA, 1 SEPT

A mob vandalised the house of a panchayat member in West Bengal's North 24 Parganas district for allegedly molesting a 10-year-old girl, police said on Sunday. A senior police officer said the accused was arrested on Sunday morning and a strong police picket was posted at Rajbari area of Rohanda panchayat of the district. The girl was allegedly molested by the accused on Saturday evening. She narrated her ordeal to her family members, who accompanied by other villagers accosted the accused. Enraged by the response of the accused, the mob vandalised the house of the accused and a shop owned by his brother in the area, the officer said, adding police had to burst tear gas shells to chase away the crowd. —*PTI*

PHOTO: X

Assam TMC president Ripun Bora quits

GUWAHATI, 1 SEPT

Assam Trinamool Congress president Ripun Bora on Sunday resigned from the party, claiming that the people of the northeastern state consider it as a "regional party" of West Bengal and are "not willing to accept" it as their own. In a letter to All India Trinamool Congress (TMC) General Secretary Abhishek Banerjee, Bora, a former Rajya Sabha member, said he had offered many suggestions to party supremo and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee to make TMC acceptable in Assam, but those were "not implemented". Bora claimed that he had suggested the need for an Assamese leader at the national level of TMC, declaring the residence of Bharat Ratna Bhupen Hazarika at Tollygunge in Kolkata as a heritage site and converting the Madhupur Satra in Cooch Behar to a cultural hub.—*PTI*

Mumbai BJP MLAs meet RSS leaders ahead of polls

MUMBAI, 1 SEPT

Ahead of the Maharashtra Assembly elections, likely to be held later this year, BJP legislators from Mumbai had a closed-door meeting with Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) leaders on Sunday. The meeting at Yashwant Bhavan in Lower Parel in central Mumbai lasted over six hours. As they came out after the meeting, BJP legislators and office-bearers of the party's Mumbai unit were tight-lipped about what they discussed. A functionary of the RSS, BJP's ideological mentor, called the meeting a "routine" one. BJP's Mumbai unit chief Ashish Shelar, an MLA from Bandra, slammed the Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) for protesting over the collapse of the statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj in Sindhudurg district on 26 August. —*PTI*

Ex-Bihar minister Shyam Rajak returns to JD(U)

PATNA, 1 SEPT

Former Bihar minister Shyam Rajak on Sunday joined Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's JD(U), less than two weeks after quitting the RJD headed by the CM's arch-rival Lalu Prasad. Rajak, who had been expelled from the state cabinet as well as the JD(U) in 2020, got re-inducted into the party here by national working president Sanjay Kumar Jha, in presence of a number of top leaders. Jha said the entry of Rajak, "a leader with grassroots-level support" will strengthen the party, "especially among the state's 'Mahadalits' who were recognised as a separate category by Nitish Kumar". "Sub-categorisation of Dalits may have become a buzzword in the backdrop of the recent Supreme Court judgement, but our leader was the veritable pioneer. —*PTI*

Shivaji statue collapse: Oppn holds 'hit with footwear' yatra

Uddhav says Narendra Modi's apology smacks of arrogance

MUMBAI, 1 SEPT

Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi on Sunday have joined the 'Jode Maro andolan' (hitting with slippers) protest in Mumbai over the collapse of Shivaji Maharaj's statue and rejected Prime Minister Narendra Modi's apology over the incident, stepping up the political confrontation with the ruling Mahayuti ahead of the assembly polls.

The 'jode maro andolan' protest reflected the unity among the Maha Vikas Aghadi partners- Shiv Sena (UBT), NCP (SP), and Congress, pitted against the ruling troika of Shiv Sena, BJP, and NCP.

Sharad Pawar, Uddhav Thackeray, and state Congress chief Nana Patole laid wreaths at a memorial dedicated the martyrs of the joint Maharashtra' agitation in south Mumbai, before leading the march from Hutatma Chowk to the Gateway of India.

Opposition leader Uddhav Thackeray slaps slippers on banner featuring Eknath Shinde in Mumbai on Sunday PHOTO: ANI

They slammed the Union and state governments over the statue crash, with Thackeray dismissing Modi's apology as one "smacking of arrogance". Pawar alleged the statue episode was an example of corruption. Chief Minister Eknath Shinde hit back at Thackeray and accused him of playing politics in the name of Shivaji but emulating the deeds of Mughal emperor Aurangzeb and Bijapur general Afzal Khan --both highly polarising figures in Maharashtra and the Maratha history.

Asserting that the people of Maharashtra will never forgive the insult to the revered king, Thackeray cited the statue crash, leakages in Ram Temple and the new Parliament complex to mock Modi's "guarantees". "Modi apologised for what? For the statue, he inaugurated eight months ago? For the corruption involved?" he said.

Pawar said the collapse of the statue was an example of corruption. —*PTI*

MANIPUR CM'S ASSURANCE

'Will curb militant activities soon'

IMPHAL, 1 SEPT

Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh has taken a firm stand against pro-Meitei militant groups, specifically the Arambai Tenggol, which has been accused of inciting violence against the Kuki community.

In a recent interview he said, "I told them (Arambai Tenggol) you will not do any anti-national or communal act. You have to support the government."

He noted that the group has remained silent for five months, affirming his commitment to prevent any extremist or anti-national activities.

The Arambai Tenggol has been a focal point of controversy, with Kuki representatives blaming the organisation for exacerbating violence.

He characterised the group as a cultural outfit that resorted to arms in response to an initial lack of police presence during the outbreaks of violence.

N Biren Singh PHOTO: PTI

He also emphasised his resolve not to resign from his position, recalling a dramatic incident last year when Arambai Tenggol members thwarted his attempt to step down by seizing and tearing his resignation letter in public. Kuki groups have alleged that the group conducted surveys to profile their community and marked the homes of Kuki-Zo tribals, leading to targeted violence after 3 May last year. —*PTI*

Sonam Wangchuk-led 'Delhi Chalo Padyatra' starts from Leh

LEH, 1 SEPT

More than 100 volunteers led by renowned innovator and climate activist Sonam Wangchuk started a foot march from here to New Delhi on Sunday to urge the Centre to resume the stalled dialogue with the leadership of Ladakh on their four-point agenda.

The 'Delhi Chalo Padyatra' was organised by the Leh Apex Body (LAB), which along with Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA), are jointly spearheading an agitation over the past four years in support of statehood, extension of the Constitution's sixth schedule, early recruitment process along with a public service commission for Ladakh and separate Lok Sabha seats for Leh and Kargil districts.

LAB chairman Thupstan Chhewang flagged off the march from NDS Memorial park with Wangchuk expressing hope that the government will greet them with a good news on reaching Delhi on Gandhi Jayanti, marking the birth anniversary of father of the nation Mahatma Gandhi, on 2 October.

Sonam Wangchuk PHOTO: PTI

> **It is a matter of satisfaction that people from all sections of the society, have joined this march in support of our demands...Sixth schedule of the Constitution**
>
> -Sonam Wangchuk, Climate Activist

"It is a matter of satisfaction that people from all sections of the society, have joined this march in support of our demands...Sixth schedule of the Constitution and UT with legislature is our democratic right as we want development and management of the region in accordance with our wishes and aspirations," said Wangchuk, who earlier in March held a 21-day long hunger strike in support of the demands.

Expressing confidence that more people will join the march, he said the people are enthusiastic which is evident that even a 90-year-old Ladakh citizen, who lives in Switzerland, is ready to join them in Delhi. —*PTI*

CONSENSUS ON 173 SEATS

Mahayuti alliance holds seat-sharing talks

MUMBAI, 1 SEPT

Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and Deputy CMs Devendra Fadnavis and Ajit Pawar held seat-sharing talks in Nagpur for the upcoming State Assembly polls, which are likely to be held in October-November. The meeting, which lasted for around three hours as per BJP sources, was held on Saturday.

"Yesterday's meeting was in line with the previous two-three rounds of initial discussions that took place. The final seat sharing will be sealed after another two to three meetings," the sources said. Sources from the NCP said consensus has been arrived for 173 seats, with BJP getting the maximum share, followed by Shiv Sena of Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and the Ajit Pawar-led party.

- The remaining 115 seats will be finalised soon in a meeting of Maharashtra BJP chief Chandrashekhar Bawankule, Shinde as well as senior NCP leaders Sunil Tatkare and Praful Patel, they said

The remaining 115 seats will be finalised soon in a meeting of Maharashtra BJP chief Chandrashekhar Bawankule, Shinde as well as senior NCP leaders Sunil Tatkare and Praful Patel, they added. —*PTI*

AAP cries councillor 'kidnapped'; BJP rubbishes claim

NEW DELHI, 1 SEPT

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Sunday accused the BJP of "kidnapping" its councillor Ram Chander, with the saffron party denying the charges even as the "abducted" member returned to his residence.

Upon his return, Chander claimed that he was threatened on the pretext of being framed in Eenforcement Directorate-Central Bureau of Investigation cases by the Opposition outfit.

Ram Chander, who is a councillor from Ward No 28, was one of the five members who joined the BJP last Sunday. However, a few days later, he had a change of heart after he saw Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal in his dream and returned to AAP, he said.

Later, in a video message, he said that he was taken by some people to BJP headquarters. —*PTI*

KC Tyagi resigns as JD(U) spokesperson

NEW DELHI, 1 SEPT

Janata Dal (United) spokesperson KC Tyagi, whose stand on various issues often highlighted his party's differences with ally BJP, has resigned, the regional party said on Sunday.

The JD(U) said in a statement that its president and Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar has appointed Rajiv Ranjan Prasad as its national spokesperson.

In his letter to Kumar, the former MP and socialist leader said he has been unable to do justice as spokesperson due to his involvement in other works.

Tyagi, party leaders said, will continue in his another role as "political advisor".

It is believed that frequent comments of Tyagi, who is based in Delhi and enjoys an unlikely high profile in the national media for a regional party leader due to his experience and articulation, on Central government's policies were seen by many within his party as unhelpful to the BJP-JD(U) ties.

He was the only member of the ruling National Democratic Alliance in a recent meeting, which included several Opposition parties members, with Mohammad Makram Balawi, Secretary General of League of Parliamentarians.

It may be noted that the BJP has been reaching out to allies to maintain coordination and harmony in the ruling National Democratic Alliance in its bid to quell reports of differences in the bloc. —*PTI*

KC Tyagi PHOTO: PTI

- In his letter to Kumar, the former MP and socialist leader said he has been unable to do justice as spokesperson due to his involvement in other works

Only 6.7% court infra at dist level female-friendly: CJI

NEW DELHI, 1 SEPT

Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud on Sunday said the fact that only 6.7 per cent court infrastructure at the district level is female-friendly needs to be changed.

Speaking at the 'National Conference of the District Judiciary', Chandrachud said it should be ensured that courts provide safe and accommodating environment for all members of the society.

"We must without any question, change the fact that only 6.7 per cent of our court infrastructure at the district level is female-friendly. Is this acceptable today in a nation where at the basic level of recruitment in some states over 60 or 70 per cent of the recruits are women? Our focus areas are on increasing accessibility measures which can be understood by carrying out infrastructural audits.

Chandrachud said that with the increasing number of women coming into the judiciary, the biases which we may unwittingly have towards our colleagues at the bar and the bench must be confronted.

DY Chandrachud PHOTO: PTI

He also disclosed that at the recently concluded the first-ever National Lok Adalat, almost 1,000 cases were disposed of amicably within five working days.

President Droupadi Murmu delivered the valedictory address and also unveiled the flag and insignia of the Supreme Court, a statement issued by the apex court said on Friday. —*PTI*

Hurriyat leader Salim Geelani joins PDP

SRINAGAR, 1 SEPT

Separatist leader and Hurriyat member Syed Salim Geelani on Sunday joined the People's Democratic Party (PDP) here.

Geelani joined PDP in presence of party President Mehbooba Mufti at party office here.

"PDP is a party which talks about democratic rights, human rights and political rights of people. It talks about political solution to Kashmir problem ... So I felt it is the right party to join," Geelani told reporters after his joining. He also said the Kashmir issue can only be resolved politically. "Gun cannot be a solution. This is the only way to save lives that are being lost to violence."

Salim Gilani PHOTO: PTI

Geelani, once a close aide of jailed separatist leader Shabir Ahmad Shah, was a general council member of the Hurriyat Conference, led by Mirwaiz Umar Farooq.

Welcoming Geelani, Mufti said it was good that the former separatist leader wants peaceful resolution of the Kashmir problem.

Former Congress leader Altaf Ahmad Malik was among several other leaders to join PDP. On the other hand, National Conference leader Babu Jagjiwan Lal and former PDP chief spokesperson Suhail Bukhari on Sunday joined Congress. —*PTI*

U'KHAND TENSE AFTER BARBER'S OBSCENE GESTURE AT GIRL

GOPESHWAR, 1 SEPT

A man's alleged obscene gesture towards a local teenage girl sparked tensions in the Nandanagar tehsil of Uttarakhand's Chamoli district, with hundreds of people taking to the streets on Sunday to demand the accused's arrest.

Angry villagers marched through the streets and even attempted to vandalise the barber shop run by the accused -- a 24-year-old man from another community.

The accused is absconding and his shop is shut.

Local traders' association President Nandan Singh said people hit the streets to demand action against the accused and those supporting him. Superintendent of Police (Chamoli) Sarvesh Panwar rushed to the spot with a team to pacify the protesters in view of the sensitivity of the matter. Locals said the alleged incident occurred on 22 August and the girl's father lodged a report with the local police.

The accused allegedly made obscene gestures at the girl, who lived in the same neighbourhood. She complained about the matter to her mother, who went to question the barber. But the accused had shut his shop and fled by then.

The girl's father was not in Nandanagar at that time. He was informed of the alleged incident on Saturday and he lodged a complaint at Nandanagar police station, the locals said. —*PTI*

COPS ATTACKED

Protest over RG Kar rape-murder continues

KOLKATA, 1 SEPT

Film director Aparna Sen and numerous other prominent personalities from the Bengali film industry on Sunday joined thousands of people in a massive rally demanding justice for a trainee doctor who was raped-murdered at RG Kar hospital here last month.

A police team from Hasnabad police station was attacked when they went to arrest a rape accused in North 24 Parganas district. Nine policemen were injured

In addition to the 'Mahamichhil', two other rallies took place elsewhere in the city. While one was organised by the alumni of Ramakrishna Mission-run educational institutions, another involved students and past pupils from a well-known convent school, both echoing the demand for justice for the medic.

Actress and filmmaker Aparna Sen and others take part in a protest march on Sunday in Kolkata PHOTO: ANI

At the mega rally that kicked-off at College Square, Sen, accompanied by fellow artistes such as Swastika Mukherjee, Sudipta Chakraborty, Chaiti Ghosal, Sohini Sarkar, and others, marched along Central Avenue demanding justice for the postgraduate trainee doctor.

Asked by reporters, the eminent actor-turned-director said, "We are walking on the road together, demanding justice. If needed, I will hit the road again."

Swastika Mukherjee voiced her concern, saying, "So many days have passed since the 9 August incident. After one arrest, we have not heard any further updates from the investigating agency."

A junior doctors' forum, which has been protesting since the R G Kar incident, also joined the rally. In south Kolkata, alumni of Ramakrishna Mission schools and other educational institutions marched from Golpark to Rabindra Sadan Exide Crossing carrying banners with the message 'Tamaso Ma Jyotirgamaya (Lead me from darkness to light), and demanded a fair, impartial investigation and the arrest of all those involved in the crime.

In another rally, around 300 alumni, along with current students and guardians from St John's Diocesan Girls' Higher Secondary School also organised a protest on Sunday —*PTI*

VP Dhankhar questions NGOs' silence

DEHRADUN, 1 SEPT

Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankhar on Sunday questioned the silence of certain NGOs on the violence against a "health warrior" at RG Kar Medical College and Hospital, terming the incident as "barbarity expressed in extremity". The Vice-President also said such barbaric incidents that put the entire civilisation to shame and shred what Bharat stood for should not be looked at through the prism of politics. —*PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

7 infiltrators from B'desh arrested in Tripura

AGARTALA, 1 SEPT

Five Bangladeshis and two Rohingyas, who entered Tripura without valid documents, were arrested from two separate areas in the northeastern State, police said on Sunday. Acting on a tip-off, Government Railway Police (GRP) personnel detained two people from Agartala station on Friday, a senior officer said. During interrogation, the two duo admitted that they were inmates in Cox's Bazar Rohingya camp in the neighbouring country, he said. "Ramzan Ali and Azida Begum crossed the international border and planned to go to Kolkata by train," Agartala GRP Police Station Officer-in-Charge (OC) Tapas Das said. In another incident, five Bangladeshi infiltrators and two suspected Indian touts were arrested in Dhalai district on Saturday. *—PTI*

Two-year-old killed in leopard attack in Gujarat

AMRELI, 1 SEPT

A 2-year-old boy was mauled to death by a leopard in Gujarat's Amreli district, a forest department official said on Sunday. The incident took place near Garamli village on Saturday evening, the official said. "Chirag, the son of a farm labourer hailing from Dahod, was playing when the leopard attacked. The animal picked up the child and ran some distance and dropped him after his father gave chase. The severely injured child was taken to a hospital where doctors declared him dead on arrival," the official said. The area where the incident took place is part of Gir East division forest and cages have been placed to capture the leopard, the official said. *—PTI*

UP man shares video with remarks against PM, held

MUZAFFARAGAR, 1 SEPT

A 28-year-old man was arrested here for allegedly posting a video with objectionable remarks against Prime Minister Narendra Modi on social media, police said on Sunday. Vishal from Khaikheri village in Purkazi area was arrested on Saturday, Circle Officer (CO) Rajkumar said. An FIR has been registered against him under sections 352 (intentional insult with intention to provoke a breach of peace and 353 (statement conducing to public mischief) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), he said. Further investigation is underway, Rajkumar said. *—PTI*

BSF recovers drone, seizes drugs in Punjab

TARN TARAN, 1 SEPT

BSF acting on a specific information, recovered one small drone alongwith a packet of suspected narcotics in Tarn Taran district on Sunday, officials said. BSF further said that the troops conducted a search operation in the suspected area. The recovered drone has been identified as a China-made DJI MAVIC 3 Classic. Punjab Frontier, in a press release, said that reliable information and swift action of BSF troops effectively thwarted yet another attempt of drone intrusion alongwith narcotics consignment in Punjab from across the border. Earlier last month, security forces recovered a drone during a joint search operation in the border area of the Tarn Taran district of Punjab. A statement said, "On 7 August, based on information by BSF intelligence wing about the presence of a fallen drone in the border area of Tarn Taran district, a joint search operation by BSF troops in collaboration with Punjab police was conducted in the area." *—ANI*

No relief from monsoon yet, rain fury continues

Ambulances were stuck for hrs with patients in Guwahati rains

People with their belongings travel on a boat as they move to safer places from the flood-affected area following heavy rainfall, in Patna, Bihar; A man uses a makeshift thermacol raft to move through the flooded Anil Nagar area after rains, in Guwahati, Assam on Sunday **PHOTOS: PTI/ANI**

GUWAHATI/ JAIPUR/ BHUBANESWAR, 1 SEPT

A spell of heavy rain early on Sunday inundated several arterial roads and residential areas in Assam's Guwahati, disrupting vehicular movement and causing inconvenience to residents.

People were seen wading through knee-deep waters in some areas of the city while the water level reached up to the chest in several localities.

Rainwater accumulated in hundreds of houses in the 'smart' city.

Traffic jams were reported from almost all localities in the city with vehicles stranded due to inundated roads. Ambulances were stuck for hours with patients facing severe hardship.

There were reports of power cuts in many areas, causing inconvenience to city residents. People were advised to avoid visiting landslide-prone localities and areas of waterlogging and refrain from working in the fields during thunderstorms/lightning.

Residents of Guwahati faced a horrendous situation on 5 August as a spell of heavy rain left people stranded for 7-8 hours on their vehicles till midnight.

Rajasthan

Rain accompanied with thunderstorms was recorded at some places of eastern Rajasthan where Shivganj in Sirohi district logged highest rainfall of 71 mm, the meteorological department said.

All districts of Rajasthan have recorded normal or above normal rainfall since the onset of monsoon from 1 June.

Odisha

Heavy rain lashed parts of Odisha under the impact of a depression that lay centered over the southern part of the state and north Andhra Pradesh, officials said.

The system moved with a speed of 15 kmph during the past six hours and lay centered over south Odisha and adjoining north Andhra Pradesh, the IMD said in a bulletin.

It is likely to move west-northwestwards across south Odisha and south Chhattisgarh and weaken into a well-marked, low-pressure area during the next 24 hours, the weather office. *—PTI*

24 crocodiles rescued from Vadodara between 27-29 Aug

VADODARA, 1 SEPT

A total of 24 crocodiles were rescued from residential areas in Gujarat's Vadodara amid very heavy rains between 27 and 29 August, which led to the water level in the Vishwamitri river that flows through the city rising, a forest department official said on Sunday. Apart from 24 crocodiles, 75 other animals, including snakes, cobras, five large turtles weighing nearly 40kg and a porcupine were rescued during these three days. However, no incident of crocodile-human conflict was recorded during these days. *—PTI*

DEPORTATION TO GUJARAT

Kingpin of ₹2K cr gambling racket nabbed in UAE

AHMEDABAD, 1 SEPT

In a coordinated effort, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), Gujarat police and Interpol NCB-Abu Dhabi on Sunday brought back the alleged kingpin of an over Rs 2,273 crore gambling racket apprehended in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), an official said.

A Red Notice was issued against the accused, Dipakkumar Dhirajlal Thakkar, wanted by the Gujarat police for cases of criminal breach of trust, cheating, forgery, criminal conspiracy, causing disappearance of evidence and offences under the Information Technology Act and Prevention of Gambling Act, the CBI said in a statement.

Thakkar is an accused in a criminal case registered on 25 March, 2023, at Madhavpura police station, Ahmedabad, for operating an international gambling racket.

According to the CBI, he is allegedly a kingpin of an international illegal criminal gambling racket, operating through special software applications and using hawala channels for the dispersal of proceeds of crime reported to be more than Rs 2,273 crore.

The probe agency had a Red Notice issued against Thakkar from the Interpol General Secretariat on 15 December, 2023, based on the request of Gujarat police, it said.

A Red Notice is a request to law enforcement worldwide to locate and provisionally arrest a person pending extradition, surrender, or similar legal action.

"A security mission from the Gujarat Police travelled to the UAE and returned with a Red Notice subject to India on 1 September," the statement said.

As the National Central Bureau for Interpol in India, CBI coordinates with all law enforcement agencies in India for assistance via Interpol channels, it said. *—PTI*

CBI had issued a Red Notice against the accused Dipakkumar Dhirajlal Thakkar on 15 December, 2023 **PHOTO: SCREENGRAB**

Actor Mammooty denies power group's existence in Mollywood

KOCHI, 1 SEPT

Actor Mammootty on Sunday denied the presence of any 'power group' in the film industry and called upon everyone working in the field to be vigilant so that nothing untoward happens there.

The veteran actor, in a Facebook post, praised the state government's initiative to constitute the Justice Hema Committee and requested it to implement the recommendations of the panel by enacting necessary legislation if there were any legal hurdles.

Breaking his silence on the report and the subsequent allegations that rocked the cinema world, Mammootty said that he wholeheartedly welcomes and supports the recommendations and solutions in the committee's report and urged all associations in the film industry to join hands in implementing them.

He said that the police was vigorously investigating the complaints of sexual harassment and abuse raised by several women, so let the agency carry on with its probe honestly.

The actor also said that as the full report of the committee was before the court, it can decide the punishments.

His response comes a day after his colleague in the film industry, actor Mohanlal, broke his silence over the shocking revelations in the committee's report.

Mohanlal too denied the existence of a power group in the industry and had said that cinema was a part of the society and what happens everywhere else is happening in the film world also. *—PTI*

Mammootty **PHOTO: PTI**

- Mammootty's response comes a day after his colleague in the film industry, actor Mohanlal, broke his silence over the shocking revelations in the committee's report

It is an undeniable fact that there were strong alliances of some production houses with certain directors, writers and actors to make big films in the Malayalam cinema industry. AMMA should be ready to accept that criticism and learn from it

-B Unnikrishnan, General Secretary of FEFKA

ACTOR JAYASURYA VOWS LEGAL ACTION

T'PURAM, 1 SEPT

Breaking his silence over the sexual harassment allegations against him, actor Jayasurya on Sunday refuted the accusations and said that they have "shattered" him, his family and everyone close to them.

The actor, who has been in the US with his family for the past one month, said he will face the allegations legally and his lawyers will take care of the proceedings in the cases against him till he returns.

The first FIR against the actor was registered on 28 August on a complaint by a female actor who has appeared in a handful of movies. The second case was lodged at Karamana police station here under sections 354 and 354 C (voyeurism) of the IPC on a complaint by another female actor who had alleged that Jayasurya molested her at a movie set near Thodupuzha during 2012-2013.

"Let those who have not sinned throw stones, but only at those who have sinned," he said. *—PTI*

ALL SET FOR GANESHA

Devotees carry an idol of Lord Ganesha to the pandal from a workshop ahead of the Ganesha Chaturthi festival, in Mumbai, Maharashtra on Sunday **PHOTO: PTI**

Gun factory busted in Bihar, 7 arrested

PATNA, 1 SEPT

Bihar police busted a gun factory in a village in Bhojpur district and arrested seven people involved in its operations, on Sunday.

According to Bhojpur Superintendent of Police (SP) Pramod Kumar Yadav, the illegal factory had been operational for a significant period.

"Following a tip-off about the gun factory, which was being run out of a house owned by a man named Virendra Kumar Srivastava in Chanda village, under the jurisdiction of the Naya Bhojpur police station, we initiated an investigation," Yadav stated.

PHOTO: PTI

"The team conducted a raid on the premises, leading to the arrest of the seven accused. However, some individuals managed to escape, taking advantage of the darkness. Efforts are underway to apprehend those who fled," Yadav said.

During the raid, the Bhojpur police seized one pistol, 35 tiger plates, 36 cork rods, 33 barrels, 20 butts, three drill machines, one lathe machine, one grinder, and three mobile phones. *—Agencies*

Delhi docs remove brain tumour through nasal route

PATNA, 1 SEPT

Doctors at a private hospital here have removed a complex brain tumour from a 62-year-old man through the nasal route, restoring his vision.

The patient was admitted to Ujala Cygnus Hospital in Nangloi with a diagnosis of pituitary adenoma, a type of benign tumour that arises from the pituitary gland located at the base of the brain, said Dr Monique Garg, Senior Consultant, Neurosurgery.

"Tumour had caused a significant loss of vision in both eyes and he could count fingers only up to a distance of 2 meters. The surgery, which lasted three hours and involved a near-total excision of the tumour, was conducted on 11 July. The patient was discharged on 16 July," he said.

"The transnasal transsphenoidal approach, where we access the tumour through the nasal passages and sphenoid sinus, allows us to reach and remove the tumour with minimal disruption to surrounding brain tissue. The improvement in his vision post-surgery was significant and we expect further progress in the coming weeks," he said.

After the surgery, the patient was able to count fingers up to 6m. Commenting on the successful outcome of the surgery, Dr Puneet Kant, Senior Consultant, Neurosurgery, at Ujala Cygnus Group of Hospitals, said, "Pituitary adenomas are relatively common, accounting for about 10-15 per cent of all brain tumours. They can cause a variety of symptoms depending on their size and location, including hormonal imbalances, headaches and vision problems." *—PTI*

APPREHENSIVE OF YIELD

Uneven rains put UP ryots in tough spot

LUCKNOW, 1 SEPT

The monsoon season in Uttar Pradesh officially ends in September but the uneven distribution of rainfall it brought has made the State's farmers apprehensive about the yield of Kharif crops this time.

Over half of its districts have received below-normal rainfall since June. Of the 75 districts of Uttar Pradesh, 37 have received deficient rainfall so far and seven witnessed excess, while 31 districts mostly in the central and eastern parts received normal rains, according to India Meteorological Department (IMD) data.

Shamli, in western Uttar Pradesh, is the hardest hit, recording only 20.2 per cent of its normal rainfall. Farmers in the district are struggling with stunted crop growth due to insufficient rains, according to marginal paddy farmer Muqeem Khan. Gautam Buddh Nagar, Amroha, Fatehpur and Jaunpur have also faced significant deficits.

Uttar Pradesh has so far recorded 88.5% of its normal rainfall **PHOTO: PTI**

IMD data shows Gautam Buddh Nagar district has received just 20.9 per cent of its normal rainfall so far, followed by Amroha at 40.6 per cent, Kushinagar at 41.3 per cent, Chandauli at 43.1 per cent, Fatehpur at 43.6 per cent, Saharanpur at 43.7 per cent, Jaunpur at 46 per cent and Amethi at 48.4 per cent.

Sumit Singh Vyas, a climate scientist and former adviser to the Union Agriculture Ministry, said a belt of low-pressure zone caused partially by western disturbances has affected the progression of the normal monsoon. "This leads to unequal and sudden changes in the monsoon pattern," he added.

The State as a whole has so far recorded 88.5 per cent of its normal rainfall. The districts that received excess rainfall are Auraiya, 182.1 per cent; Balrampur, 157.2 per cent; Etah, 156.9 per cent; Basti, 155.9 per cent; Firozabad, 125.7 per cent; Bareilly, 122.6 per cent, and Maharajganj, 120.3 per cent. *—PTI*

HITLER INVADED POLAND 85 YRS AGO

Poland marks the 85th anniversary of Nazi Germany's invasion at the start of World War II
PHOTO: X/@LUINWARSAW

Families in Bangladesh yearn for justice

In a dimly lit room in Dhaka, Baby Akhtar clutches a faded photograph of her husband, Tarikul Islam Tara, who vanished twelve years ago after allegedly being taken by Bangladesh's security agencies, a personal tragedy reflecting the broader nightmare of enforced disappearances that has haunted Bangladesh for over the last 15 years.

"I have been waiting for my husband for the last 12 years. My life and family have been ruined for no fault of mine. We want justice. We hope that the interim government will give us justice. I want my husband back," she said as tears rolled down her cheeks.

The fate of hundreds like Tara remains shrouded in uncertainty following the recent ouster of former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, whose administration was accused of presiding over systematic enforced disappearances.

With Hasina's departure, the interim government has taken a significant step by forming a commission to investigate these cases.

However, for the families still waiting, the commission's formation is both a beacon of hope and a reminder of the years lost in their pursuit of justice, given nearly 700 registered cases of forced disappearances in the last one and a half decades of the Awami League regime. "Forced disappearances were the order of the day during the Sheikh Hasina regime. For the families of the missing, the commission's formation is a momentous occasion. We hope to get justice after fighting this battle for the last 15 years," Sanjida Islam Tulee, coordinator of Mayer Daak—an NGO working with the families of the disappeared—told PTI.

"This terror of enforced disappearances was used to suppress political opposition, silence dissent, and create a climate of fear in the country. In the past 1.5 decades, families of those who had been subjected to enforced disappearance were systematically denied legal redress. Although the registered cases are around 700, the actual figures are much higher," she said. The recent formation of a commission of inquiry by the interim government of Bangladesh, led by a retired high court judge and including legal and human rights experts, offers a glimmer of hope to beleaguered families by investigating the disappearances and tracing the missing individuals.

The fate of hundreds remains shrouded in uncertainty following the recent ouster of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina ***PHOTO: PTI***

This development came shortly after the new government signed the United Nations Convention against Enforced Disappearances, signalling a commitment to addressing these grave human rights violations.

In commemoration of the International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances in 2024, a joint statement by human rights organisations including Anti-Death Penalty Asia Network, Asian Federation Against Involuntary Disappearances, the Capital Punishment Justice Project, International Federation for Human Rights, Mayer Daak, Odhikar and Robert F Kennedy Human Rights denounced the systematic enforced disappearances committed by Bangladeshi law enforcement and security forces under the ousted Sheikh Hasina administration.

According to a statement issued by Odhikar, an NGO working for justice for the victims of enforced disappearances, data they collected shows that between January 2009 and June 2024, 709 people were subjected to enforced disappearances by Bangladeshi law enforcement agencies and security forces.

"Among them, 471 were surfaced alive or were produced in court. Meanwhile, 83 victims were found dead, with some of them allegedly caught in 'crossfire' with security forces. To date, 155 people remain missing," it said. Human rights defenders and families have highlighted that victims of enforced disappearances were held in secret detention centres known as "Aina ghar" or "mirror rooms," including one reportedly in Dhaka Cantonment and others across the country, operated by various security agencies.

Human rights activists pointed out that the recent release of a few victims who had been held in secret detention for years confirms the long-denied allegations of enforced disappearances committed under the ousted Hasina administration. Rights activist Michael Chakma, who was detained in secret cells for the last six years and was released only after Hasina's ouster, recalled the horror he went through in extra-judicial custody.

"I was beaten every day and tortured beyond imagination. I never dreamed of coming out and thought I would die there only. For the last six years, I hardly remember when I last saw the sunlight. There were many more like me in those cells," he told reporters. Political parties such as the Bangladesh Nationalist Party and Jamaat-e-Islami also complained about several instances of their activists and supporters being victims of forced disappearances.

"The Awami League made forced disappearances an institutionalized weapon against the opposition to quell dissent. There are at least more than 600 cases of BNP workers and supporters being abducted and forced disappearances. Although many of them returned home after several years, most of them were not the same. Still, there are hundreds of such BNP workers across Bangladesh who are victims of forced disappearances," senior BNP leader Sama Obayed told PTI. The Jamaat-e-Islami also echoed similar experiences.

The Awami League regime had unleashed a reign of terror across the country, and forced disappearances were used as a weapon to intimidate the opposition. The Jamaat is the worst sufferer of such practices. Still, even after three weeks of the fall of Sheikh Hasina's government, there are no reports of what happened to them," Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami supremo Shafiqur Rahman said. *—PTI*

SALAR

Without X, Brazilians feel disconnected from the world

The blocking of social media platform X in Brazil divided users and politicians over the legitimacy of the ban, and many Brazilians had difficulty and doubts over navigating other social media in its absence.

The shutdown of Elon Musk's platform started early Saturday, making it largely inaccessible on both the web and through mobile apps after the billionaire refused to name a legal representative to the country, missing a deadline imposed by Supreme Court Justice Alexandre de Moraes. The blockade marks an escalation in a monthslong feud between Musk and de Moraes over free speech, far-right accounts and misinformation.

Brazil is one of the biggest markets for X, with tens of millions of users. "I've got the feeling that I have no idea what's happening in the world right now. Bizarre," entertainment writer and heavy X user Chico Barney wrote on Threads on Saturday. Threads is a text-based app developed by Instagram that Barney was using as an alternative. "This Threads algorithm is like an all-you-can-eat restaurant where the waiter keeps serving things I would never order."

Bluesky, a social media platform that was launched last year as an alternative to X and other more established sites, has seen a large influx of Brazilians in the past couple of days. The company said Friday it has seen about 200,000 new users from Brazil sign up during that time, and the number "continues to grow by the minute". Brazilian users are also setting records for activities such as follows and likes, Bluesky said.

Previous users of other platforms welcomed Brazilians to their ranks. "Hello literally everyone in Brazil," a user wrote on Threads. "We're a lot nicer than Twitter here," said another.

Platform migration isn't new for Brazilians. They were huge adopters of Orkut and, when Orkut went kaput, they very gladly moved to other platforms. X is not as popular in Brazil as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube or TikTok. However, it remains an important platform on which Brazilians engage in political debates and is highly influential among politicians, journalists and other opinion makers.

It's also where they share their sense of humour. Many of the country's most famous memes originate from posts on X before spreading to other social networks. Last week, for instance, Brazilians collaboratively crafted an absurd storyline for a fictional telenovela, complete with a theme song created using artificial intelligence tools.

Pop stars and their fanbases were also hit by Brazilians being left off the platform. "Wait a lot of my fan pages are Brazilian!!! Come back hold up!!," Cardi B said Friday on X. A fan page dedicated to Timothée Chalamet, known by the handle TimotheeUpdates, said it would temporarily cease updating as all of its administrators are Brazilian.

The Brazilian Bar Association said Friday in a statement that it would request the Supreme Court review the fines imposed on all citizens using VPNs or other means to access X without due process. Brazil's bar association argued that sanctions should never be imposed summarily before ensuring an adversarial process and the right to full defence. "I've used VPNs a lot in authoritarian countries like China to continue accessing news sites and social networks," Maurício Santoro, a political science professor at the State University of Rio de Janeiro, said on the platform before its shutdown. "It never occurred to me that this type of tool would be banned in Brazil. It's dystopian."

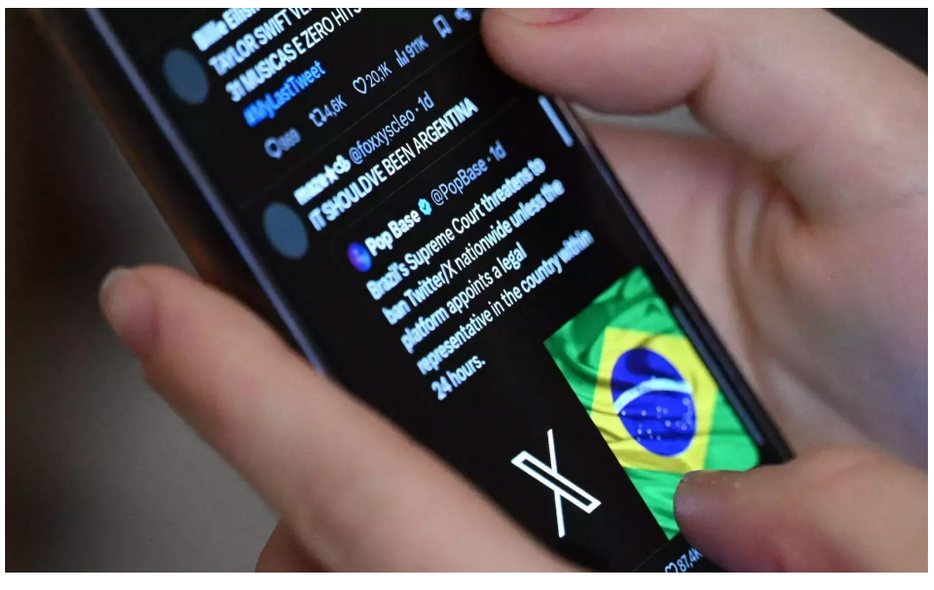
A search Friday on X showed hundreds of Brazilian users inquiring about VPNs that could potentially enable them to continue using the platform by making it appear they are logging on from outside the country.

"Tyrants want to turn Brazil into another commie dictatorship but we won't back down. I repeat: do not vote on those who don't respect free speech. Orwell was right," right-wing congressman Nikolas Ferreira, one of former President Jair Bolsonaro's closest allies, published before X went off. Musk replied with an emoji suggesting agreement: "100".

Ferreira is a 28-year-old YouTuber who received the most votes of the 513 elected federal lawmakers in the 2022 election. De Moraes ordered the block of his social media accounts after a mob of Bolsonaro supporters attacked Brazil's Congress, presidential palace and Supreme Court in January 2023 seeking to overturn the election.

Lawmaker Bia Kicis said "the consequences of Alexandre de Moraes' attacks to Elon Musk, X and Starlink will be regrettable for Brazilians." She also urged Rodrigo Pacheco, the president of the country's Senate, to act. Kicis has repeatedly urged Pacheco to open impeachment proceedings against the Supreme Court justice.

"We need to leave this state of apathy and stop the worst from happening," the pro-Bolsonaro lawmaker, whose profiles were temporarily blocked by de Moraes in 2022, also said. *—AP*


TAYLOR SWIFT
#MyLastTweet
@foxxyscleo · 1d
IT SHOULDVE BEEN ARGENTINA
Pop Base @PopBase · 1d
Brazil's Supreme Court threatens to ban Twitter/X nationwide unless the platform appoints a legal representative in the country within 24 hours.

Brazil is one of the biggest markets for X, with tens of millions of users ***PHOTO: X***

LETTERS Write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

Wages of Assam tea workers meagre, welfare scheme absent: CAG

Wages of tea garden workers in Assam are "meagre", with "several shortcomings and areas of concern" in implementation of labour laws and worker welfare provisions, a recent Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) report has said.

It also found the state government's intervention in fixing wages as per the Minimum Wage Act (MW Act) "insufficient", noting that efforts to improve the lives of the workers have "fallen short" of making any substantial change. The performance audit on 'Implementation of Schemes for Welfare of Tea Tribe' for the period 2015-16 to 2020-21 maintained that low income and lack of education have been major barriers to the overall development of the workers in the state.

The audit was performed in four zones – Cachar, Dibrugarh, Nagaon and Sonitpur. There are 390 tea estates in the four sampled zones, of which 40 estates (10 per cent) were selected based on the size of the plantations and number of workers employed.

Apart from scrutiny of records, the exercise included interviews of 590 workers in the selected estates. The report said the Tea Tribes Welfare Department (TTWD) tried to address the issues of the workers, but without basic socio-economic data, and their initiatives were implemented "haphazardly".

The audit was performed in four zones – Cachar, Dibrugarh, Nagaon and Sonitpur. There are 390 tea estates in the four sampled zones, of which 40 estates (10 per cent) were selected based on the size of the plantations and number of workers employed ***PHOTO: ANI***

"The wages the workers received in the tea estates were meagre," the report said, pointing out that the Assam government did not fix the minimum pay as per the MW Act, 1948. It also said that workers were not a part of scheduled employments notified by the state government, as a result of which they do not get benefits of minimum wage standard and variable dearness allowance.

The secretary, Labour and Welfare Department, informed the CAG that when the state government came out with initiatives to increase pay as per the MW Act, it got challenged in the court and hence, the wages could not be increased as desired.

The report also underlined the disparity of wages among workers of Barak and Brahmaputra Valley, and said the Labour Department "could not provide any justification" for it. It said workers in the Barak Valley have been receiving "at least 10 per cent lower" wage rates than the Brahmaputra Valley workers, with the government never intervening to address the issue.

- The report said that as per the 2019 wage rates, tea workers of Assam were being paid the least wages compared to other tea-producing states like Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka and West Bengal. It said the authorisation granted by the government for such an arrangement is not available on record

The report said that as per the 2019 wage rates, tea workers of Assam were being paid the least wages compared to other tea-producing states like Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka and West Bengal. It noted that though wages to tea workers are paid partly in cash and partly in kind in Assam, the authorisation granted by the government for such an arrangement is not available on record.

"The Labour Department was also not aware about the year of commencement of payment of wages in kind and the purpose for the state," the report said. The list of qualified items to be paid in kind was neither prescribed by the government nor was the system for calculating the cost of these items, it said, adding, the payment of wages in cash or in kind was "not in compliance with provisions" of the MW Act.

The CAG report also said the Assam Tea Employees Labour Welfare Board did not undertake any mandated welfare activities, and 85 per cent of the expenses borne for it during 2015-20 are related to administrative expenses. During 2015-16 to 2020-21, the director, TTWD, had planned 187 welfare schemes with a budget of Rs 600.19 crore, out of which actual implementation was carried out in only 82 schemes at a cost of Rs 210.65 crore against the budget allotment of Rs 365.60 crore, it said.

The budget speeches from 2015-16 to 2019-20 had mention of 25 schemes under the TTWD, out of which nine were not implemented due to non-receipt of funds. The TTWD claimed that lack of adequate field staff was an issue resulting in shortcomings in the implementation of schemes, which was also observed by the auditors. *—PTI*

160 held over alleged cybercrime ops in Philippines

MANILA, 1 SEPT

Philippine authorities raided a suspected illegal online gaming and cyber-scam complex in a central province and took into custody more than 160 people — mostly Chinese and Indonesians — who were committing internet-based crimes, officials said Sunday. The raid on Saturday by more than 100 government agents, backed by military intelligence, on a resort compound in Lapu-Lapu city was part of an ongoing crackdown after President Ferdinand Marcos Jr ordered a ban in July on widespread — and mostly Chinese-run — online gaming operations that cater mostly to clients in China, where illegal gambling is banned. Marcos said then that the massive illegal gambling operations have ignored Philippine laws with largescale violations of regulations and also committed other crimes, including financial scams, human trafficking, torture, kidnappings and murder. *—AP*

Pope to pay longest visit to Asia from 2-13 Sept

VATICAN CITY, 1 SEPT

If any evidence were needed to underscore that Pope Francis' upcoming trip to Asia and Oceania is the longest, farthest and most challenging of his pontificate, it's that he's bringing along his secretaries to help him navigate the four-country programme while keeping up with work back home. Francis will clock 32,814 kilometers (20,390 miles) by air during his 2-13 September visit to Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, East Timor and Singapore, far surpassing any of his previous 44 foreign trips and notching one of the longest papal trips ever, both in terms of days on the road and distances travelled. *—AP*

PHOTO: X

'Russian spy' whale Hvaldimir found dead in Norway

NORWAY, 1 SEPT

A 14-feet long and 2,700 pound weighing Beluga whale which captured the world's imagination in 2019 was found dead in Norway. The whale which was nicknamed as Hvaldimir the spy whale was once in speculation that it was part of a Russian reconnaissance mission. However, there was no official claim made by Russia and mystery deepened as if it was the whale which was caught unfortunately in a strange circumstances. The name Hval is the blend of the Norwegian word for whale and Russian President name Vladimir adding to it was fascinated globally Unlike other whales, which typically inhabit the remote and frigid Arctic waters, Hvaldimir was unusually comfortable around humans, which the experts believe that it had been in captivity for most of his life
—Salar News with Agencies

Japan storm brings heavy rainfall in many areas

TOKYO, 1 SEPT

Tropical Storm Shanshan brought torrential rain Sunday to Japan's Shizuoka area, 180 km (110 miles) southwest of Tokyo, as weather officials warned the storm would linger for several more days. Shanshan, packing winds of 65 kph (40 mph), made landfall Thursday, leaving landslides, flooded rivers, torn branches and scattered debris in its path. In southwestern Japan, people were busy cleaning up muddied homes and throwing out broken appliances. The storm is so far connected with at least six deaths, including three people who were trapped in a mudslide. It left one person missing and 127 people injured, according to Japanese public broadcaster NHK, which compiles reports from local governments. *—AP*

Polio vaccination drive kicks off in Gaza

The campaign began with a small number of vaccinations & aims to reach about 6,40,000 children

DEIR AL-BALAH, 1 SEPT

Palestinian health authorities and United Nations agencies on Sunday began a large-scale campaign of vaccinations against polio in the Gaza Strip, hoping to prevent an outbreak in the territory that has been ravaged by the ongoing Israel-Hamas war.

Authorities plan to vaccinate children in central Gaza until Wednesday before moving on to the more devastated northern and southern parts of the strip. The campaign began with a small number of vaccinations on Saturday and aims to reach about 6,40,000 children.

Israel has agreed to limited pauses in fighting to facilitate the campaign, according to the World Health Organisation. Hospitals in Deir al-Balah and Nuseirat confirmed that the campaign had begun on Sunday.

The campaign comes after the first polio case was reported in Gaza in 25 years — a 10-month-old boy, now paralysed in the leg. The World Health Organisation says the presence of a paralysis case indicates there could be hundreds more who have been infected but aren't showing symptoms.

Most people who have polio do not experience symptoms, and those who do usually recover in a week or so. But there is no cure, and when polio causes paralysis it is usually permanent. If the paralysis affects breathing muscles, the disease can be fatal. *—AP*

The campaign comes after the first polio case was reported in Gaza in 25 years
PHOTO: X@LOLLLLLLAJR

'Those who murder don't want deal'

JERUSALEM, 1 SEPT

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has expressed sorrow over the deaths of six hostages, saying the killings prove that Hamas does not want a cease-fire deal. Netanyahu said Sunday that he was heartbroken to hear the news of the hostages' deaths. He accused Hamas of killing them in "cold blood" and said Israel would hold the group accountable. He also accused the group of scuttling ongoing cease-fire efforts. "Whoever murders hostages doesn't want a deal," he said. Critics in Israel have accused Netanyahu of dragging his feet in cease-fire talks — a charge he denies.
—AP

Hersh Goldberg-Polin, Ori Danino, Eden Yerushalm, Carmel Gat, Alexander Lubnov, and Almog Sarusi ***PHOTO: THE HOSTAGES FAMILIES FORUM***

Israel recovers bodies of 6 hostages in Gaza

JERUSALEM, 1 SEP

Israel on Sunday said it had recovered the bodies of six hostages in Gaza, including a young Israeli-American man who became one of the most well-known captives held by Hamas as his parents met with world leaders and pressed for his release, including at the Democratic convention last month. Their recovery sparked calls for mass protests against Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who many families of hostages and much of the wider Israeli public blame for failing to bring them back alive in a deal with Hamas to end the 10-month-old war. Negotiations over such a deal have dragged on for months.

In a separate development, gunmen killed three people when they opened fire on a vehicle in the occupied West Bank, where Israel has been carrying out large-scale military raids in recent days. Israel's Magen David Adom rescue service confirmed the casualties.

Palestinian militants killed three Israeli police officers on Sunday when they opened fire on a vehicle in the occupied West Bank, where Israel has carried out large-scale raids in recent days. *—AP*

Kamala calls Trump's Arlington visit 'a stunt'

WASHINGTON, 1 SEPT

US Vice President Kamala Harris said former President Donald Trump "disrespected sacred ground" in his recent appearance at Arlington National Cemetery, where the Republican nominee took and distributed images despite a federal prohibition on campaign activity on the grounds.

Harris, in a statement posted Saturday on the social media platform X, cited reports that Trump's campaign aides created an altercation with a cemetery staffer and proceeded to take photographs and film the former president, including at the graves of Afghanistan war veterans, after being warned about rules at the site.

"Let me be clear: the former president disrespected sacred ground, all for the sake of a political stunt," Harris said, calling Arlington a "solemn place where we come together to honour American heroes ... not a place for politics." The original incident stemmed from Trump's and

Kamala Harris ***PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA***

Republicans' continued criticism of President Joe Biden and now Harris for the chaotic US withdrawal from Afghanistan.

They were among 13 US service members and more than 100 Afghans who died in an Aug 26, 2021, bombing at Hamid Karzai International Airport. Trump's campaign was warned about not taking photographs before an altercation at the cemetery, according to defense officials. Officials have said since that an Arlington employee whom two Trump campaign staff members allegedly "verbally abused and pushed" aside has declined to press charges.
—AP

Russia says it downed over 150 drones

MOSCOW, 1 SEPT

Russian air defences intercepted and destroyed 158 Ukrainian drones overnight, including two over the city of Moscow and nine over the surrounding Moscow region, the defence ministry said Sunday.

Forty-six of the drones were over the Kursk region, where Ukraine has sent its forces in recent weeks in the largest incursion onto Russian soil since World War II. A further were 34 over the Bryansk region, 28 over the Voronezh region, and 14 over the Belgorod region - all of which border Ukraine.

A coal-fired power plant near the city was reportedly hit, as was an oil refinery within city limits. Attacks on a power

PHOTO: TASS

plant in the Tver region, about 60 miles (100 kilometers) northeast of the capital, were also reported. Russia's Defence Ministry said 122 drones were shot down over border areas of Kursk, Bryansk, Voronezh and Belgorod.

Drones were also shot down deeper into Russia, including one each in the Tver region, northwest of Moscow, and the Ivanovo region, northeast of the Russian capital. Ukrainian drone strikes have brought the fight far from the front line into the heart of Russia. Since the beginning of the year, Ukraine has stepped up aerial assaults on Russian soil, targeting refineries and oil terminals to slow down the Kremlin's assault.

In Ukraine, eight drones were shot down out of 11 launched by Russia, according to the Ukrainian air force. Five people were wounded in shelling in the country's northeastern Kharkiv region, local officials said.

Ukraine's top general, Oleksandr Syrskyi, said the situation with Russia's offensive in eastern Ukraine remained "difficult," adding that all necessary decisions were being taken.
—AP/ DW News

Imran's party reschedules public gathering again

LAHORE, 1 SEPTEMBER

Imran Khan founded Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has rescheduled its public gathering at Minar-e-Pakistan Lahore, which was previously slated to take place on 15 September, reported ARY News. The party, has now decided upon holding the public gathering on 22 September, and have also asked the Deputy Commissioner for permission to hold the Minar-e-Pakistan gathering. Through Barrister Ahmad Salman Niazi, PTI Secretary General Omar Ayub made the request. The date of the public meeting has been rescheduled to 22 September in observance of the 12th Rabi-ul-Awwal, after the party first requested permission to hold it.

August's public meeting in Islamabad was similarly called off by the Imran Khan-led party after the government again revoked the No Objection Certificate (NOC). 22 August was the planned date of the public meeting in Tarnol; however, due to the administration's revocation of the NOC, the PTI was forced to postpone it. *—ANI*

At least 49 teachers belonging to minority communities were forced to resign in Bangladesh after the fall of the Sheikh Hasina-led government on 5 August, according to a minority organisation ***PHOTO: X @ALBD1971***

49 minority B'deshi tutors forced to resign

DHAKA, 1 SEPT

At least 49 teachers belonging to minority communities were forced to resign in Bangladesh after the fall of the Sheikh Hasina-led government on 5 August, according to a minority organisation in the violence-hit nation.

The Bangladesh Chhatra Oikya Parishad, the student wing of Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Oikya Parishad, said this at a press conference on Saturday, The Daily Star newspaper reported. The organisation's coordinator, Sajib Sarkar, said in the students' violence that ensued for days following the ouster and fleeing of 76-year-old prime minister Hasina, minority teachers across the country faced physical assault, and at least 49 of them were forced to resign.

However, 19 of them were reinstated later, the report quoted him as saying. Sarkar added that religious and ethnic minorities have also faced attacks, looting, assault on women, vandalism of temples, arson attacks on homes and businesses, and killings during this period.

Bangladesh saw several incidents of violence against members of Hindu, Buddhist and Christian communities following the fall of the Hasina-led Awami League government last month.

Hasina resigned and fled to India on 5 August following unprecedented anti-government student-led protests over a controversial quota system in government jobs.
—PTI

'Yunus to show outline on reforms soon'

DHAKA, 1 SEPT

Bangladesh's interim leader Muhammad Yunus will soon come up with a comprehensive framework on reforms, including on the transition of power, after consulting all political parties, his special assistant has said. Yunus, who was appointed Bangladesh's Chief Adviser after the fall of Sheikh Hasina-led government held a series of meetings with 35 political parties, including Jatiya Party, Gono Forum, Islami Andolon Bangladesh and others. *—PTI*

GERMANY STATE POLLS

A far-right party is looking for double win

BERLIN, 1 SEPT

Two State elections in eastern Germany on Sunday offer the far-right Alternative for Germany the chance to become the strongest party for the first time and could produce painful results for the unpopular national government. A new party founded by a prominent leftist also hopes to make an immediate impact.

About 3.3 million people are eligible to vote in Saxony and nearly 1.7 million in Thuringia. Sunday's elections are being watched nervously in Berlin: While the three parties in Chancellor Olaf Scholz's governing coalition were weak there already, they risk dropping under the 5 per cent support threshold needed to stay in the State legislatures at all.

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, right, welcomes Britain's Prime Minister Keir Starmer in Berlin, Germany, Wednesday. ***PHOTO: PTI***

A third election follows 22 September in another eastern State, Brandenburg, currently led by Scholz's centre-left Social Democrats. Germany's next national election is due in a little over a year.

Alice Weidel, a national co-leader of the anti-immigration Alternative for Germany, or AfD, has described Sunday's votes as "an important milestone for the national parliamentary election next year." The party secured its first mayoral and county government posts last year, and now says it wants to govern at State level, too.

In Thuringia, surveys show it trailing AfD, but candidate Mario Voigt hopes to cobble together a governing coalition. Germany's stance toward Russia's war in Ukraine is also an issue. Berlin is Ukraine's second-biggest weapons supplier after the United States; those weapons deliveries are something both AfD and BSW oppose. Wagenknecht also has assailed a recent decision by the German government and the US to begin deployments of long-range missiles to Germany in 2026. *—AP*

Over 700 wild animals to be killed for food in Namibia

NAMIBIA, 1 SEPT

The sun blazes down from a cloudless late-August sky, and temperatures in the southwestern African country of Namibia reach 35 degrees Celsius (95 degrees Fahrenheit). For months, it has hardly rained at all. Southern Africa is battling an unprecedented drought this winter.

Approximately, 700 animals to be killed out of which 150 have already been shot, and some 57 tons of meat are said to have been distributed to villages near the affected conservation areas. Experts attribute the extreme dry spell to the El Nino weather phenomenon, which has been particularly severe this year. Several months ago, Namibia, as well as Zambia, Zimbabwe and Malawi, declared a state of emergency due to the persistent drought.

Now, the Namibian government has controversially decided to help the country's rural population by allowing more than 700 wild animals to be hunted — animals that should be under special protection in the country's national parks. The animals include elephants, antelopes, buffaloes, zebras and wildebeests, most of which will now be shot by professional hunters. Namibia's Ministry of the Environment says around half of Namibia's population, some 1.4 million people, are acutely threatened by food and water shortages.

Not-for-profit organisation Elephant-Human Relations Aid (EHRA), which campaigns for peaceful coexistence between elephants and humans, said the move constitutes the "largest mass-cull of wildlife in Namibian history."
—Courtesy, DW News

PHOTO: PTI

Bajaj Housing Rs 6,560 cr IPO to open on 9 Sept

NEW DELHI, 1 SEPT

Bajaj Housing Finance is set to float its much-awaited Rs 6,560-crore initial share-sale for public subscription on 9 September. The initial public offering (IPO) will conclude on September 11 and the bidding for anchor investors will open for a day on September 6, according to the red herring prospectus (RHP). The proposed IPO comprises a fresh issue of equity shares of up to Rs 3,560 crore and an Offer For Sale of equity shares to the tune of Rs 3,000 crore by parent Bajaj Finance. The share sale is being conducted to comply with the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI's) regulations, which require upper layer non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) to be listed on the stock exchanges by September 2025. Proceeds from the fresh issue will be used to augment the company's capital base to meet future capital requirements. *—PTI*

JSW MG Motor retail sales rise 9% to 4,571 units in Aug

NEW DELHI, 1 SEPT

JSW MG Motor India on Sunday said its retail sales increased 9 per cent year-on-year to 4,571 units in August. The company had sold 4,185 units in August 2023. Over 35 per cent of all retail sales were new energy vehicles (NEVs), which include the ZS, the company's flagship electric vehicle, and the Comet, JSW MG Motor India said in a statement. On 11 September, 2024, the automaker will launch a new model, Windsor, it added. *—PTI*

Trishneet ranked 6th youngest Indian on Hurun rich list

CHANDIGARH, 1 SEPT

Trishneet Arora, the founder and CEO of TAC Security secured the 1,463rd position on the Hurun India Rich List 2024 with a net worth of Rs 1,100 crore. At 30, Arora is recognised as the 6th youngest Indian on the prestigious list, highlighting his role in the growing prominence of India's tech and cybersecurity sectors, as per the list. Born in a small town in Punjab, his early interest in computers and technology laid the foundation for what would become a groundbreaking career in cybersecurity. In 2013, at 19, Arora founded TAC Security, which has since played a pivotal role in securing the digital assets of major enterprises and government bodies worldwide. Under Arora's leadership, the company has achieved several milestones, including securing over 500 clients in 50 countries, spanning regions like the US, Canada, UK, Europe, Israel, Australia, and India. *—PTI*

Toyota posts 35% rise in sales at 30,879 units in Aug

NEW DELHI, 1 SEPT

Toyota Kirloskar Motor on Sunday reported a 35 per cent growth year-on-year in total wholesales at 30,879 units in August. The automaker had reported a dispatch of 22,910 units in both domestic and exports in the same month last year. "As we approach the festive season, demand for our products remains buoyant, and we are already witnessing increased consumer interest and higher footfall across all our dealerships," Toyota Kirloskar Motor Vice-President, Sales-Service-Used Car Business, Sabari Manohar, said in a statement. SUVs and MPVs continue to significantly contribute to the company's sales numbers, reflecting a growing preference for these segment vehicles, he added. Interestingly, this trend is not limited to major urban centres but extends to tier-2 and tier-3 markets as well, demonstrating widespread customer acceptance for TKM offerings, Manohar said. *—PTI*

Commercial LPG up ₹39 per cylinder, ATF price cut 4.6%

The price reduction will help ease the burden on airlines

NEW DELHI, 1 SEPT

Jet fuel, or Aviation turbine fuel (ATF), price was on Sunday reduced by 4.6 per cent while the rate of commercial LPG used in hotels and restaurants was hiked by Rs 39 per 19-kg cylinder in the monthly revision done in line with international oil price trends.

ATF price was cut by Rs 4,495.5 per kilolitre, or 4.58 per cent, to Rs 93,480.22 per kl in the national capital, according to state-owned fuel retailers. The price reduction will help ease the burden on airlines for whom fuel makes up for almost 40 per cent of the operating cost.

The reduction follows two rounds of monthly price increases. Jet fuel prices were on 1 August raised by 2 per cent or Rs 1,827.34 per kl and by 1.2 per cent (Rs 1,179.37 per kl). These hikes followed a steep 6.5 per cent (Rs 6,673.87 per kl) reduction effected on 1 June.

ATF price was cut by Rs 4,495.5 per kilolitre, or 4.58 per cent, to Rs 93,480.22 per kl in the national capital PHOTO: PTI

The ATF rate in Mumbai was reduced to Rs 87,432.78 per kl on Sunday from Rs 91,650.34 previously. Prices differ from state to state depending on the incidence of local taxes. Alongside, oil firms increased the price of commercial LPG by Rs 39 to Rs 1,691.50 per 19-kg cylinder. This is the second straight monthly increase. Prices were hiked by Rs 6.5 per cylinder on August 1. The two rounds of increase follow four monthly price reductions. In four price reductions, rates were cut by Rs 148 per 19-kg cylinder.

Commercial LPG now costs Rs 1,644 per 19-kg cylinder in Mumbai, Rs 1,802.50 in Kolkata and Rs 1,855 in Chennai. Rate of cooking gas used in domestic households, however, remained unchanged at Rs 803 per 14.2-kg cylinder.

State-owned Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL), and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL) revise prices of ATF and cooking gas on the first of every month based on the average price of benchmark international fuel and foreign exchange rate.

Prices of petrol and diesel continue to remain frozen. Rates had been cut Rs 2 per litre in mid-March. Petrol costs Rs 94.72 a litre in Delhi while diesel is priced at Rs 87.62. *—PTI*

HIGHER VALUATIONS

FPIs inflow in equities drops to ₹7,320 cr in Aug

NEW DELHI, 1 SEPT

Foreign investors have adopted a cautious stance and infused Rs 7,320 crore in the Indian equities in August owing to high valuation of stocks and the unwinding of the Yen carry trade after Bank of Japan raised interest rates.

This investment was way lower than Rs 32,365 crore in July and Rs 26,565 crore in June, according to data with the depositories. While September is likely to see continued interest from FPIs, the flows would be shaped by a combination of domestic political stability, economic indicators, global interest rate movements, market valuations, sectoral preferences, and the attractiveness of the debt market, Vipul Bhowar, Director Listed Investments, Waterfield Advisors, said.

According to the data with the depositories, Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) made a net investment of Rs 7,320 crore in Indian equities in August. The fundamental reason for the poor FPI interest compared to the preceding two months is the high valuation in the Indian market. With Nifty trading at above 20 times estimated FY25 earnings, India is the most expensive market in the world now.

FPIs have opportunities to invest in much cheaper markets and, therefore, their priority is markets other than India, V K Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Financial Services, said

Additionally, the unwinding of the Yen carry trade on August 24 significantly impacted FPI behaviour, leading to substantial sell off in Indian equities, Bhowar said. *—PTI*

US-based Ohmium International to invest Rs 400 cr in Tamil Nadu

CHENNAI, 1 SEPT

Tamil Nadu has secured a Rs 400 crore investments from US-based Ohmium International, Inc., to set up a manufacturing facility in the state, Chief Minister MK Stalin said on Sunday.

Stalin accompanied by Minister for Industries TRB Rajaa and senior government officials were present at the signing of Memorandum of Understanding between Ohmium and the state government for the upcoming project in neighbouring Chengalpattu district. "Another successful day in San Francisco. We have secured a Rs 400 crore investment from Ohmium in Chengalpattu district, creating 500 jobs," Stalin said.

The chief minister is currently on a visit to the United States seeking investments to Tamil Nadu. "This (the signing of MoU with Ohmium International) marks a significant step in nurturing the ecosystem for green energy production and fuelling a sustainable future," the chief minister wrote in a social media post.

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin at the signing of an MoU for an investment by Ohmium during his visit to San Francisco PHOTO: PTI

According to the website of Ohmium International, the company designs, manufactures modular, scalable Proton Exchange Membrane electrolysers that enable cost-competitive green hydrogen production. The company's suite of electro-chemical products help customers achieve their sustainable energy goals across various industrial transportation and energy projects. Ohmium International has operations worldwide and has manufacturing facilities in India. In 2023, the company raised $250 million in Series C financing, led by TPG Rise Climate, the website said. *—PTI*

BSE JUMPED 1,279.56 PTS

Mcap of 8 of top-10 most valued firms surge Rs 1.53 lakh cr

NEW DELHI, 1 SEPT

The combined market valuation of eight of the top-10 most valued firms surged Rs 1,53,019.32 crore last week, with Bharti Airtel and IT majors Infosys, Tata Consultancy Services emerging as the biggest gainers, in line with a record rally in equities.

Last week, the BSE benchmark jumped 1,279.56 points or 1.57 per cent. Rallying for the ninth straight session on Friday, the 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 231.16 points or 0.28 per cent to settle at an all-time closing high of 82,365.77. During the day, it jumped 502.42 points or 0.61 per cent to hit a record intraday peak of 82,637.03.

The market valuation of Bharti Airtel soared Rs 47,194.86 crore to Rs 9,04,587.12 crore. Infosys added Rs 33,611.37 crore taking its valuation to Rs 8,06,880.50 crore. The valuation of Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) jumped Rs 31,784.9 crore to Rs 16,46,899.17 crore and that of ICICI Bank surged Rs 18,734.3 crore to Rs 8,66,374.41 crore.

The market capitalisation (mcap) of Reliance Industries climbed Rs 13,396.42 crore to Rs 20,43,107.10 crore and that of HDFC Bank rallied Rs 5,600.24 crore to Rs 12,44,206.43 crore.

However, the mcap of Hindustan Unilever slumped Rs 8,411.54 crore to Rs 6,52,739.95 crore and that of ITC declined by Rs 4,776.48 crore to Rs 6,27,587.76 crore. Reliance Industries continued to retain the title of the most valued firm. *—PTI*

TeamLease Services says 'Infant attrition' on rise

MUMBAI, 1 SEPT

Poor work-life balance, flexibility, and job dissatisfaction are leading to 4-5 per cent annual increase in 'infant attrition'- employees quitting within six months of joining- mainly in sectors like consumer durables, IT, and software, and BFSI, a senior executive of TeamLease Services said.

"Infant attrition in India, mainly seen in the 22-32 years age group, is growing annually at 4-5 per cent and is mostly driven by factors like poor work-life balance and flexibility, which is particularly important to younger workers," TeamLease Services Chief Strategy Officer Subburathinam P told.

Lack of career development opportunities, culture of the organisation, work environment, managerial impact, and changes happening in the family are also prompting new hires to leave in search of environments where they can grow and advance, he said. *—PTI*

CENTRE, STATES TO DISCUSS WAYS TO PROMOTE INDUSTRIAL GROWTH

NEW DELHI, 1 SEPT

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal would chair a meeting of state industry ministers on 5 September to discuss ways to promote industrial growth of the country, an official said.

As industry is a state subject, they are key stakeholders in promoting the sector, the official said. "Issues like ways to promote manufacturing, promotion of industries and state issues may come up for deliberations on September 5 here," the official added.

The Centre is already taking a number of measures in this direction and that includes reducing compliance burden, promoting ease of doing business and setting up of industrial townships. Recently, the Government of India approved 12 new industrial cities in 10 states on the lines of Greater Noida in Uttar Pradesh and Dholera in Gujarat to boost domestic manufacturing with an estimated investment of Rs 28,602 crore.

PHOTO: PTI

These industrial areas will be in Khurpia in Uttarakhand, Rajpura-Patiala in Punjab, Dighi in Maharashtra, Palakkad in Kerala, Agra and Prayagraj in UP, Gaya in Bihar, Zaheerabad in Telangana, Orvakal and Kopparthy in AP, and Jodhpur-Pali in Rajasthan, and one in Haryana.

Eight such cities are already under different stages of implementation. Trunk infrastructure has been created in four cities -- Dholera (Gujarat), Auric (Maharashtra), Vikram Udyogpuri (Madhya Pradesh) and Krishnapatnam (Andhra Pradesh) and allotment of land plots is underway for the industry. *—PTI*

Suzuki total sales dip 4% to 1,81,782 units in August

NEW DELHI, 1 SEPT

Maruti Suzuki India on Sunday reported a 4 per cent year-on-year decline in total sales in August at 1,81,782 units. The company had dispatched 1,89,082 units in the same month last year, Maruti Suzuki India (MSI) said in a statement. Total domestic passenger vehicle wholesales were at 1,43,075 units last month as compared with 1,56,114 units in the year-ago month, a dip of 8 per cent, it added. Sales of mini segment cars, comprising Alto and S-Presso, declined to 10,648 units last month as against 12,209 units a year ago. Sales of compact cars, including Baleno, Celerio, Dzire, Ignis and Swift, declined 20 per cent to 58,051 units as compared with 72,451 units.

Utility vehicles, consisting of Grand Vitara, Brezza, Ertiga, Invicto, Fronx and XL6, clocked sales of 62,684 units last month as compared to 58,746 units earlier. *—PTI*

Raymond receives large number of business inquiries after B'desh crisis

NEW DELHI, 1 SEPT

Leading textiles and apparel company Raymond has received a "huge number of inquiries" from global firms after the crisis in neighbouring Bangladesh and is ready to grab this opportunity, its Chairman & Managing Director Gautam Hari Singhania said.

Raymond, which has invested in its garmenting facility to become the third largest suit maker in the world, is ready to "take advantage" from the current situation, Singhania told PTI. Asked if he expects shifting of some garmenting business to India from Bangladesh, he said, "We are hoping so. We are seeing the inquiries. It obviously needs a little bit of time, but we are certainly seeing positive signs on that."

India is better-placed with its end-to-end supply capabilities linking all stages as companies as Raymond are present in both fabric and garmenting business, which, in turn, will save time for international brands also on final delivery, he said. "Bangladesh does not have a fabric supply. India has got a great opportunity to take advantage of this fabric supply because we have the fabric base here. They have (only) garmenting base," said Singhania.

Chairman & Managing Director Gautam Hari Singhania PHOTO: X

Singhania said Raymond's capacity expansion has come online, which is perfectly timed. "So we are lucky to have those capacities," he said, adding, "we are... always looking for opportunities".

Though Indian labour may be more expensive than Bangladesh, "look at the totality of the situation. I have a fabric and end-to-end supply. I save your time for which you pay me something."

The company has divested Raymond Lifestyle, following its demerger with parent company Raymond, which is all set to list this week. This would house all apparel-related businesses of the nearly 100-year-old Raymond group. *—PTI*

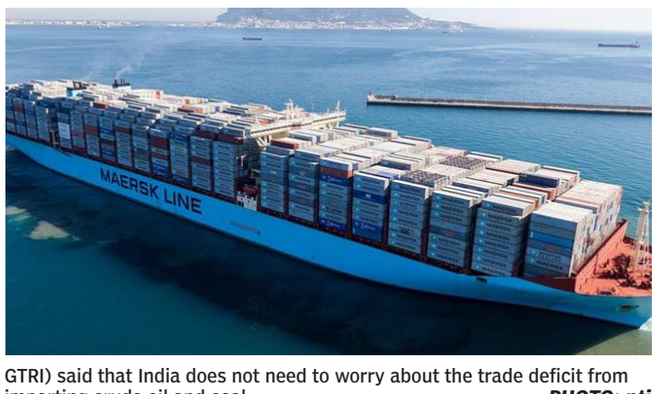
TRADE DEFICIT WITH 75

India has trade surplus with 151 nations: GTRI

NEW DELHI, 1 SEPT

India has recorded trade surplus with as many as 151 countries such as the US and Netherlands, while the country has a trade deficit with 75 nations including China and Russia during the first half of this year, according to think tank GTRI.

The Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) said that India does not need to worry about the trade deficit from importing crude oil and coal, however, it must focus on reducing the industrial goods imports, especially from countries like China, as these threaten India's economic sovereignty. "Between January and June 2024, India had a trade surplus with 151 countries, representing 55.8 per cent of its exports and 16.5 per cent of its imports, totalling USD 72.1 billion," GTRI said in a report.



GTRI) said that India does not need to worry about the trade deficit from importing crude oil and coal PHOTO: pti

The biggest surpluses were with the USA (USD 21 billion) and the Netherlands (USD 11.6 billion) during January-June this year. "India had a trade deficit with 75 countries, which accounted for 44.2 per cent of its exports and 83.5 per cent of its imports, resulting in a USD 185.4 billion deficit, much larger than India's overall trade deficit," it said, adding this situation highlights the need to reduce reliance on specific imports and strengthen domestic production.

The top five countries with the highest trade deficits were China with USD 41.88 billion, Russia with USD 31.98 billion, Iraq with USD 15.07 billion, Indonesia with USD 9.89 billion, and the UAE with USD 9.47 billion.

Remaining 18 countries with trade deficit exceeding USD one billion include Saudi Arabia (USD 9.43 billion), Switzerland (USD 8.46 billion), South Korea (USD 6.93 billion), Japan (USD 6.13 billion), Qatar (USD 5.76 billion), Hong Kong (USD 5.21 billion), Taiwan (USD 4.28 billion), Australia (USD 3.34 billion), Thailand (USD 2.60 billion), Germany (USD 2.10 billion), Vietnam (USD 2.07 billion), Malaysia (USD 1.49 billion), , Peru (USD 1.10 billion), and Ireland (USD 1.10 billion). *—PTI*

'Food inflation areas of concern for tea industry'

GUWAHATI, 1 SEP

Sluggish growth in domestic consumption, rising food inflation and slow recovery of exports post the Covid pandemic are some of the challenges faced by the tea industry, a senior official said. Tea producer associations and the Tea Board India have been concerned over the muted demand growth in the country, he said.

The remarks came from Sanjay Shah, chairman of the Federation of All India Tea Traders Association (FAITTA), during its 10th annual general meeting here on Saturday evening. "As retailers within the FAITTA fold, we are witnessing the market movements from close quarters," Shah said.

Rising levels of food inflation also remain a concern area, as it adversely impacts consumption, he said. "Given that incomes do not adjust as fast as prices, high inflation in essentials tend to adversely impact demand for non-essentials. Even within essentials, consumers may shift to lower priced non-premium products," he said.

PHOTO: PTI

The FAITTA chairman also maintained that there are underlying concerns over the ability of the market to absorb the "several rounds of price increases (of tea), which have been inevitable given the sharp rise in main raw material prices last year". *—PTI*

Dirty Seine: Paralympic triathlon events postponed

11 para triathlon events are now scheduled for Monday

PARIS, 1 SEPT

Paralympic triathlon competitions in Paris scheduled for Sunday have been postponed because of concerns about water quality in the Seine River after heavy rainfall, organizers said.

The 11 para triathlon events are now scheduled for Monday, if upcoming water testing allows, the Paris 2024 organizing committee and World Triathlon said in a joint statement.

Rainstorms hit the French capital Friday and Saturday. Heavy rains cause wastewater and runoff to flow into the river, leading to a rise in bacteria levels including E. Coli.

This is the second scheduled change for the para-triathlon events. They had initially been scheduled to take place over two days, Sunday and Monday, but were moved to Sunday because of rain forecasts.

The disruption is another hiccup for the city's efforts to clean up the river for future public swimming, one of Paris' most ambitious promises ahead of hosting the Olympics and Paralympics this summer. The men's triathlon event during the Paris Olympics was delayed and several test swims were canceled because of high E. coli levels after rainfall.

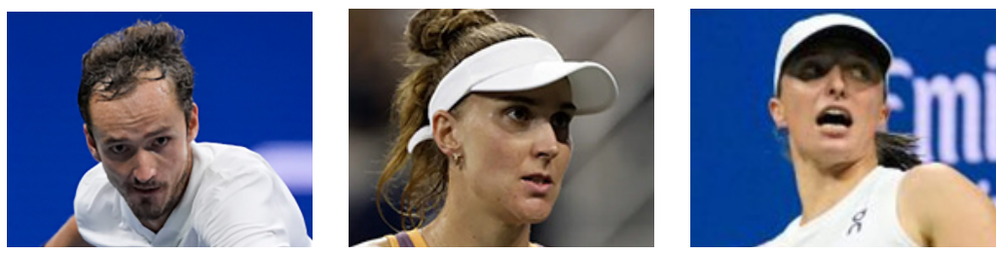
—PTI

Paralympic triathlon events were postponed because of poor water quality in Seine River *PHOTO: X / @PARALYMPIC.ORG*

Narayana and Anita bow out

Asian Para Games silver medal-winning duo of Narayana Konganapalle and Anita returned empty-handed, finishing eighth overall in the PR3 mixed double sculls rowing of the Paris Paralympics here on Sunday.Making their Paralympics debut, the Indians secured a timing of 8:16.96 seconds to finish second in Final B of their repechage event which was meant to determine their standings.

US OPEN 2024



Daniil Medvedev, Beatriz Haddad Maia and Iga Swiatek *PHOTO: X / @USOPEN*

Medvedev restores order to US Open night session

NEW YORK, 1 SEPT

Fifth seed Daniil Medvedev restored order to the US Open evening session Saturday after the chaotic exits of former champions Novak Djokovic and Carlos Alcaraz the previous two nights.

The 28-year-old, who is now the only former champion remaining in the men's field, denied a feisty challenge from young Italian Flavio Cobolli 6-3, 6-4, 6-3 in two hours, 18 minutes to set a fourth-round showdown with Portugal's Nuno Borges.

"I said before the match that for me the upsets don't matter. The only thing [is when] the conditions are a bit tricky the favorites may have less margin than the other guys. Just have to be more cautious," said Medvedev, who improved to 38-13 on the season [21-6 on hard courts].

Beatriz Haddad Maia advanced to the US Open fourth round after a crucial video review decision that changed the match's momentum against Anna Kalinskaya.

Chair umpire Miriam Bley reviewed the play on her tablet and ruled in favor of Haddad Maia, allowing the point to stand. This decision visibly frustrated Kalinskaya, who struggled to regain her composure and ultimately lost the match 6-3, 6-1.

World No.1 **Iga Swiatek** eased past 25th seed Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova with a 6-4, 6-2 victory to book her spot in a fourth straight US Open Round of 16 on Saturday night.

And the 2022 US Open champion did it in style.

After earning an early break to lead 3-1 in the opening set, Swiatek struck her version of the wicked backspinning winner that has been the signature hot shot of the opening week of the tournament. In response to a big first serve down the tee from Pavlyuchenkova, Swiatek lunged for a forehand squash return that floated in the air before handing just over the net.

—AP

Bopanna-Sutjiadi pair enters mixed doubles QFs

India's Rohan Bopanna and his Indonesian partner Aldila Sutjiadi moved into the mixed doubles quarterfinals of the US Open here. Bopanna and Sutjiadi, seeded eighth, beat the Australian duo of John Pears and Katerina Siniakova of the Czech Republic 0-6 7-6(5) 10-7 in a second-round match that lasted one hour and 13 minutes.Bopanna and Sutjiadi will next play fourth seeds Matthew Ebden and Barbora Krejcikova. Bopanna and his partner had won 7-6(7) 7-6(5) against Germany's Tim Puetz and Demi Schuurs.

Saptak Talwar in sight of Top-10 finish

JAKARTA, 1 SEPT

Saptak Talwar was in sight of his first Top-10 finish on the Asian Tour after carding 3-under 68 to be placed tied-13th in the Mandiri Indonesia Open here. Talwar, who plays regularly on the PGTI, is now 9-under 204 for three rounds. Among the other Indians, Veer Ahlawat (69) was T-23, Khalin Joshi (70) was T-41, SSP Chawrasia (73) was T-48 and Gaganjeet Bhullar (70) was T-57. Indian-American Manav Shah, a winner on the PGA Tour Latin American, was also T-41.

—PTI

WOMEN'S 200M -T36

Yiting Shi, of China, right, leads the race next to Danielle Aitchison, of New Zealand, before wining at Women's 200m -T36, at the Stade de France stadium, during the 2024 Paralympics on Sunday *PHOTO: PTI*

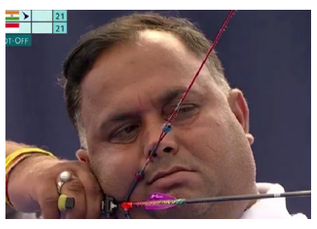
Rakesh Kumar overcomes blip to defeat Ken in Shoot-off

PARIS, 1 SEPT

World No. 1 archer Rakesh Kumar overcame a blip in his final arrow to defeat Ken Swagumilang of Indonesia in the shoot-off and enter his second successive Paralympics quarterfinals in the compound men's open category, here on Sunday.

In a battle between the top-two world-ranked archers, Rakesh held his slender one-point lead and needed a 9-point shot to seal the issue in five ends. But he slipped to the 8-pointer red-ring as both the archers were locked 144-144 in the regulation five ends, consisting of 15 arrows.

In the ensuing shoot-off, the 39-year-old veteran, who made a quarterfinal exit in the Tokyo Paralympics, held his nerve to shoot a perfect 10, while Ken managed an 8.



Indian para archer Rakesh Kumar *PHOTO: SCREENGRAB*

Rakesh will face the winner of Canada's Kyle Tremblay and Austria's Meier in the quarters.

Rakesh started on the backfoot with Ken pulling off a perfect first end shooting 30 out of 30, while the Indian dropped a point.

Rakesh bounced back to drill in three 10s, while Ken managed 28 to take a one-point lead. The third and fourth ends saw both the archers dropping a point each as Rakesh maintained his slender lead before the slip-up in his final arrow of the designated five ends.

The Jammu man had won gold medals in individual and mixed team events of the Asian Para Championships last year.

He also bagged the mixed team gold medal at the World Para Championships.

—PTI

Jeev finishes tied third; Randhawa signs off ninth

GREATER NOIDA, 1 SEPT

A disastrous closing triple-bogey spoiled his card as tournament host Jeev Milkha Singh signed off at the tied third place in the inaugural India Legends Championship here on Sunday.

Even though it was his best finish on the Legends Tour, where he has been playing for the last three years, Jeev was hardly pleased about the final day when he scored a four-over 76 at the Jaypee Greens Golf Course and tumbled out of contention in the USD 500,000 event.

Despite Jeev missing out, it was a good finish for the host country in the first Legends Tour event on Indian soil.

Behind Jeev, playing partner Jyoti Randhawa (68-72-74) was the next best in tied ninth place on 2-under 214.

—PTI

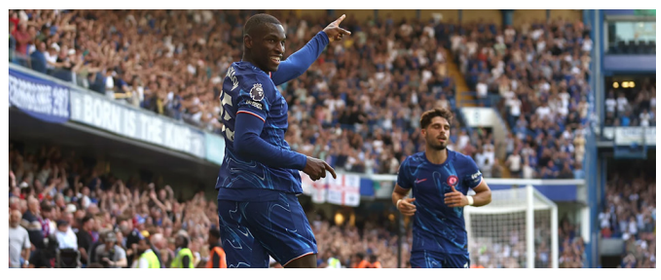


PHOTO: X / @CPFC

Chelsea held by Crystal Palace

LONDON, 1 SEPT

Chelsea produced arguably their best 45 minutes yet under Enzo Maresca on Sunday but were unable to beat Crystal Palace after being pegged back in the second half to draw 1-1. Maresca's side started on the front foot, and after Cole Palmer and Noni Madueke both went close to opening the scoring, Nicolas Jackson broke the deadlock when he finished off a superb team move in the 25th minute.

The Blues continued to go in search of a second goal and Palmer saw a free-kick wonderfully tipped behind by Dean Henderson after the restart. Maresca will quickly learn that in the Premier League, missed chances can be punished, and so it proved when Eberechi Eze scored a brilliant equalizer from outside the area with only Palace's second shot on target.

—AP

PHOTO: PTI

Never thought of hitting record 19 sixes: Ayush

NEW DELHI, 1 SEPT

South Delhi Superstarz skipper Ayush Badoni, who hit a record 19 sixes, believes his ability to time the ball is the reason behind a record-smashing 55-ball 165 runs effort in the Delhi Premier League match against North Delhi Strikers. The 24-year-old right-hander's superb effort guided his team to a 112-run win on Saturday. Ayush, who also shared a 286-run partnership with opener Priyansh Arya for the second wicket, bettered the record for most sixes by a batter in an innings that stood in the name of West Indian great Chris Gayle and Estonia's Sahil Chauhan. They had both hit 18 maximums in T20 games.*—PTI*

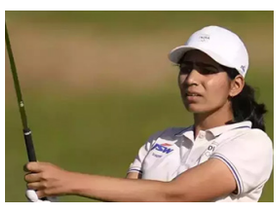


PHOTO: PTI

Diksha rises in 3rd round at Women's Irish Open

DUBLIN, 1 SEPT

India's Diksha Dagar played a bogey-free 4-under 69 and rose to T-31 from T-55 in the third round of the KPMG Women's Irish Open. Diksha, who shot 72-74 on the first two days, had four birdies between the sixth and the 12th with no bogeys and is now 4-under for 54 holes. A good finish will go a long way in restoring Diksha's confidence after modest performances at the Olympic Games and missing the cut at the AIG Women's Open. The other three Indians, Pranavi Urs, Tvesa Malik, and Ridhima Dilawari, missed the cut, as Diksha returned to the form that had earned her victory at the Czech Ladies Open and a third place at Hero Women's Indian Open last year.*—PTI*

Rahane's 100 keeps Leicestershire afloat

CARDIFF, 1 SEPT

Seasoned India batter Ajinkya Rahane compiled his 40th First-Class century a marvelous 192-ball 102 as Leicestershire battled hard to avoid defeat against Glamorgan in their County Championship Division Two match here on Sunday.

Rahane, a veteran of 85 Tests and 90 ODIs, struck 13 fours and a six during his stay in the middle and was also involved in a vital stand of 183 runs for the fourth wicket with Australian Peter Handscomb, who was batting on 94 at lunch on the final day of the four-day game. Leicestershire's international pair Rahane and Handscomb got together to save the game for them after Glamorgan's Colin Ingram had crafted a career-best, unbeaten 257 at Sofia Gardens.

Rahane *PHOTO: X/LEICSCCC*

At stumps on the third evening, Rahane was 47 not out and Handscomb unbeaten on 33, as Leicestershire ended at 144 for 3, trailing by 155, when bad light stopped play with 21.2 scheduled overs remaining.

—PTI

Litton, Mehidy lead Bangladesh's fightback

RAWALPINDI, 1 SEPT

Century-maker Litton Das and Mehidy Hasan Miraz led a Bangladesh fightback in the second Test and overshadowed Pakistan fast bowler Khurram Shahzad's maiden five-wicket haul here on Sunday.Litton laced his attacking 138 with 13 fours and two sixes while Mehidy made an equally impressive 78 that propelled Bangladesh to 262 after Shahzad's early burst had left the tourists reeling at 26 for six inside the first hour on Day 3.

Pakistan, which lost the first Test by 10 wickets last week, lost opener Abdullah Shafique and nightwatchman Shahzad to fast bowler Hasan Mahmood and limped to 9-2 at stumps for an overall lead of 21 runs. Shafique had a below-par series by scoring only 42 runs in four innings before he edged Mahmud and the fast bowler capped the perfect day for Bangladesh by knocking back the stumps of Shahzad in the last over of the day.

Bangladesh's Litton Das celebrates after scoring century during the third day of second test cricket match between Pakistan and Bangladesh, in Rawalpindi *PHOTO: PTI*

Shahzad snared 6-90 but both Litton and Mehidy counterattacked the right-arm seamer after lunch with an enterprising 165-run partnership while keeping sole specialist spinner Abrar Ahmed at bay (0-83). Shahzad added two more to his four-wicket burst in the morning session when Mehidy offered a tame return catch to the bowler and Taskin Ahmed was pinned down leg before wicket.

Litton raised his century soon after tea when he cut Ahmed to the third-man boundary and further frustrated Pakistan by raising 69 runs with No. 10 Mahmud, who made 13.Pakistan was scratchy in the field as Ahmed couldn't hold onto a tough one-handed return catch when Litton was on 90 and then skipper Shan Masood dropped a low catch off Mahmud at short cover.All-rounder Salman Ali Agha, who bowled 41 overs in the first test after Pakistan left out Abrar but bowled just 3.4 overs this time around, finally ended Pakistan's misery in the field when Litton was caught at long-on after staying at the wicket for 5.5 hours. *—PTI*

BOXING'S FUTURE HANGS IN BALANCE

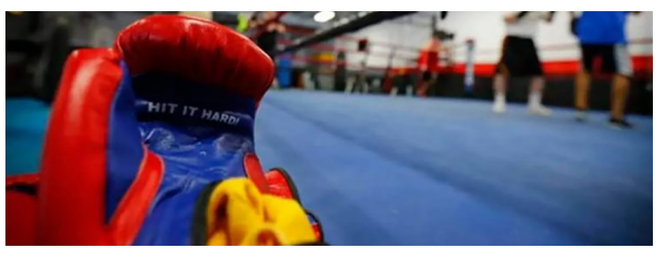
Asian body votes in favour of IBA

AL AIN, 1 SEPT

Boxing's already uncertain Olympic future was thrown into further jeopardy after the sport's Asian governing body voted against leaving the suspended International Boxing Association (IBA) to join the rival association.

The polling was held via a secret ballot with 21 countries voting in favor of continuing with IBA, while 14 cast their ballot in favor of joining World Boxing, the new body constituted to run the affairs of the sport. There was one invalid vote.

Besides India, which participated as an observer, the other countries whose names figured on the roll call included, Bahrain, Bhutan, Brunei, Cambodia, China, Chinese Taipei, Timor Leste, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, Lebanon, Macau, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Palestine, Philippines, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Syria, Tajikistan, Thailand, Turkmenistan, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan, Vietnam and Yemen.



21 countries voted in favour of continuing with IBA *PHOTO: PTI*

The IBA has been at loggerheads with the IOC, with the latter managing the Olympic qualification process for the Tokyo and Paris Games.

With the Asian Boxing Confederation (ASBC) refusing to join World Boxing, which is being pushed as an alternative to IBA, the future of the sport in the 2028 Los Angeles Games hangs in a balance.

Following the voting, IBA hit out at World Boxing, saying the new body lacked the wherewithal to organize major international events.

—PTI

Smriti Mandhana picked up for WBBL

MELBOURNE, 1 SEPTW

Six Indian cricketers, including vice-captain Smriti Mandhana, will be part of the upcoming Women's Big Bash League (WBBL), starting 27 October, after being picked by different teams.

While Mandana was presigned by Adelaide Strikers, Dayalan Hemalatha will play the league for the first time after the top-order batter was drafted by the Perth Scorchers, where she will add firepower to their line-up.

Wicketkeeper-batter Yastika Bhatia will also make her WBBL debut after being picked up by the Melbourne Stars, where she'll join national teammate Deepti Sharma.

Smriti Mandhana *PHOTO: PTI*

India all-rounder Shikha Pandey has been picked up by Brisbane Heat, where she is expected to inject much-needed pace into the squad and add plenty as a powerful middle-to-lower-order batter.

—PTI